MEMOIRS OF
ELLIOTT DEVOCIOUS MANCILL

BORN
SEPTEMBER 14,1889

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The family acknowledges with grateful appreciation those who gave many hours of their time and efforts to bring together in one volume the works of Elliott Devocious Mancill. To Glenn Allen Mancill for the arrangements and printing, more especially to Deborah Lynn Mancill Hendrix who edited and typed this volume.

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PREFACE

The pioneers of our country have contributed their knowledge along with their toil and labour coupled with sorrow and tragedy to truly add to our strength as a nation. Thus they have enriched our heritage.

Such a pioneer was Elliott Devocious Mancill. Who, at the age of eighty two, reaches back to the "greeness of his valley" and deep "roots" of his childhood to share the memories of a lifetime. Along with his love and concern for others he is proud of his heritage. His "roots" reach all the way back to that hill called "Calvary." Deep into that solid "Rock" and while he may possess little in this life he stands on the threshold of "paradise." Accepting the burdens of life without complaint as if they were simply a way of life. Only after he has given of his strength does he sit down to share his heritage with us.

Beginning at the age of eighty two and finishing the last part of his memoirs at the age of ninety three. It was only natural that his memories overlapped and sometimes he repeats happenings, but only in relation to each event he then relates them to. Elliott Mancill kept no notes or diary. Everything in this memoir is from his memory.

The decision was made to print each of his writings as they appear in his original script. Leaving them as near to complete and unabridged as possible. Therefore, each member of the family may obtain a copy of all his works.

All of the original manuscripts, along with the responsibility to edit and publish them was given to his youngest son.

Elliott Devocious Mancill, at present, is living in his cottage on the old home site of John Jackson Mancill near Red Level, Alabama. He is ninety five years of age. He is able to teach those who will visit him and many do and are blessed at the opportunity to hear him speak.

May we cherish these memories. And may the generations who follow after him remember him as he was and is unto this day.

Glenn A. Mancill

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HISTORY OF EDMOND MANCILL

Edmond Mancill was born on his father's homestead in Covington County Alabama in 1854, one of five sons - no sisters.

His father died when he was a child. He was six years old when the Civil War began and only twelve when it ended in 1866. His mother remained a widow, raised her five sons to manhood during the war of 1860 to 1866 and through the trying poverty of the reconstruction, lived with her last son Aaron after he married and until she became feeble. Aaron's wife Aunt Lilia had no help to care for her in her infirmity, all her children being so small. So Edmond and Rosa took her, my grandmother, into their home because they had three teenaged girls to help care for her.

She became helpless and was a bed patient for six months before her death in 1896 at age 86 years. I was in the room on the morning of her death and was a witness at the age of seven. My sisters proped her up in her bed on an inclined strait chair, a pillow on it, and offered her food. She could not eat; they removed the pillow and chair, laid her gently down on her bed and pillow. She passed quietly to rest, no sound, no movement.

My father, Edmond, was married while living in his mother's log house on the homestead, but either rented or built a house near the old home. There four or five of his children were born while he farmed on his mother's land. Two of his children, a boy, Hubert, and a girl, Donie, died in childhood. There they were buried in the family plot selected by his mother where she had buried his father in the field near their log house. Here, too, his brother Calvin had been buried. After his mother had sold the homestead to a Mr. Hassel, and moved away, she too, was laid to rest there beside her husband, one son and two grandchildren. She died in the year 1896 at age 86.

John E., Edmond and Aaron all bought land adjoining each other ten miles west in the adjoining county of Conecuh, cleared virgin forest for farm land and co-owned land. On the land they built a successful water mill to saw the timber from their land to use in building their own frame dwelling houses.

Later they added a grist mill of large flint grindstones and a cotton gin. John and Ed owned the saw mill in partnership from the first. Later they divided. John took the saw mill, and my father bought John's interest in the mill building and the grist mill. John set up the saw mill on his land farther away from his first adjoining land, and operated it with a steam boiler and steam engine.

Later my father built a separate building on the original mill site and set up a steam boiler and steam engine to operate a single breast 60 saw cotton gin but operated the cotton press with the water wheel that operated both the grinding rocks and cotton press.

The gin turned out six bales of cotton a day. The cotton was unloaded from the wagons in baskets, filled by hand, and raised to the gin house second story floor with a windlass, hand operated over a pully on a turning frame to swing it around through the door to the floor. Each man's cotton was stored around in the gin house in separate stalls. One man was employed to fill baskets and dump it into the gin hopper where it was fed into the gin. When the cotton was pressed into 500 pound bales, it was covered with jute bagging and tied with metal bounds called ties, six ties to a bale.

The 1893 panic of Grover Cleveland's administration led to lower prices for cotton, and my father told me he sold a 600 pound bale of cotton for three cents a pound, $18.00, to buy one section of leather belting twelve inches wide to use on the steam engine to run the gin.

I remember often being at the gin and watching and hearing the engine run and seeing the fluffy cotton come out of the gin between two one-eighth inch screen metal rollers, then pushed into the press, packed down until full; then seeing the press block come down, operated by pullies and a long metal screw from both sides, to force it down into the press compacted tightly until the ties and the buckles holding each end of the tie were all in place. Then the operation was reversed and the block slowly raised up out of the press. The removable sides and ends holding the bale were then removed, and the bale tumbled out to be loaded in the owner's wagon and taken home and to market.

All the while and intervening days between "mill" and "gin" days, my father returned to his farming--preparing, planting, cultivating, "laying by" or gathering his own cotton and corn crops. This continued year after year until it became too much for my aging father; so he had to sell the mill and the gin to lessen his labor.

Finally when his sons and daughters all married and left him, he built two tenant houses on his place and rented out most of his farm land to tenants "on halves", dividing at harvest time.

In 1908, at age 18, I left off working on the farm and this spring in February his (our) house burned by some incident to the ground. Little of the contents were saved. It was spring plowing, time to prepare the land for a crop. He set up housekeeping with Mother and sister Essie in one of the tenant houses. The neighbors were so very free hearted that we lacked for nothing to set up housekeeping in the tenant house. Then, after his crops were laid by, he began the rebuilding of another house after the model of the last one, between the same two brick chimneys left standing by the fire.

All the money he owned was burned in the fire. He reclaimed the melted silver and some gold, but the paper money was a loss. He did not tell anyone, to my knowledge, how much he lost, nor did I ever hear one word of complaint from his lips.

I know nothing of where or how he got the necessary money to buy the material for the new building. He was a quiet man, never any unnecessary talk or any word of complaint. He bore his regrets or grief in his own bosom and never voiced a word of it to anyone. He was a man of faith and never voiced anything but a prayer and thanks to his Lord and Master. Never was any guile heard from his lips. If ever there were blameless men, he was numbered among them. He had no fears in life, in loss, or in death. He was a son of the true Israel, of God; and it could be said of him he believed God's every word and trusted wholly in God, thru life and in death. He never gossiped, told nothing that needed not to be told.

He changed his religious beliefs after raising his family in the Missionary Baptist Church of which he was a deacon. While a member of the Sepulga Missionary Baptist Church he helped in the building of the new frame constructed building, which replaced the first of log construction in the late 1890's. This building is still well preserved and is in present use now eighty years later, (1975). My father was a regular daily Bible reader and unfailingly kept up daily family prayer in his home no matter how hard or long his daily work. Every night after supper was over and the daily work completed, the entire family gathered around the hearth side and by the lamp or fire light, he read the chapter from his Bible which

followed the one he had read the night before with all the family seated in a semi-circle around the hearth and without comment from him on what had been read. All the family, he, mother, girls, boys, large and small, knelt by their chairs and rested their elbows on the seat, bowed in silence while he prayed, thanking "our Father in Heaven" for all the blessings of life and prayed for all his family to live their lives to please God, to keep themselves unspotted from sin and to please God in all things and closed his every prayer with the request that "all our dear ones be kept from harm and all evil in Jesus name, Amen".

He bought the younger children a book with pictures telling the whole Bible account of the creation, the lives of all the great men from Adam to Christ, the prophets, David and Goliath, Daniel, Joseph in Egypt, Moses and the Law, Elijah, Elisha, the Apostles, Christ, the preaching of his Gospel, the writers of the New Testament, the facts, promises, the commands of the Gospel, John the Baptist, baptism and transfiguration of Christ, the crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

I read this book with much interest and concern and received impressions, truths and influence which helped me to shape a Christian life. We all owe much to our parents for the right examples and their influence for good upon our lives in shaping us for usefulness in a world where we need more than anything the best of influence.

My sister Minnie Shaver after she was married was the first one in his family to hear a preacher of the restoration movement who came into our community. He came into our community to preach at the Herbert School House with the plea to come back to the Bible for our faith, practice, work and worship as did the early disciples reported in the book of Acts of the Apostles. To call Bible things by Bible names, to abandon the creeds and doctrines of men and go to the Bible only as authority in religion. To abandon sectarianism, denominationalism and all-ISMS and SCISMS and be Christians only. She heard his preaching, read her Bible after him and was convinced that he was teaching the New Testament truly as it reads. She obeyed the gospel, being baptized into Christ and left the Baptist church for the church that Jesus built upon the rock--truth of his being the Son of God. She knew she had found the right way of the Lord as it is taught in his word; the one strait and narrow way.

She came home to talk to our father and persisted until he was convinced of the errors he had believed. He was hard to convince, but she would not give up. They read the scriptures together into the late hours many nights. My father was an honest man, hard to convince that what he had long believed of the peculiar Baptist doctrine that a true believer could not fall from grace and be lost in the end, and also that baptism is not a condition of, or necessary to salvation from sin and many other false teachings of the Baptist Denomination; but after reading for himself and being honest, he continued to read the scriptures until the scriptures convinced him that he had been in error on many subjects for a long time. He eventually gave up his errors and accepted the plain truth of the scriptures, left the Baptist Church, which he could not find any mention of in the New Testament, was baptized into Christ and into Christ's body, his church, out of the world and out of the Baptist Church which Christ had not built, which had its beginning not in Jerusalem but in England, not in the New Testament time but in the seventeenth century.

All his family followed him. He lived his many remaining years from the 1890's until 1942 and died at the age of 88, on the eighth day of the eighth month at 8 o'clock A.M.

He was not immediately abandoned by his Baptist preaching brethern. They were reluctant to give up such an honest, truthful, steadfast man from among their number and continued to visit and talk with him for several years after he left them for the Church of Christ. I remember that one of the Baptist preachers named George Shears, a very fluent speaker, who had attended Highland Home Christian College and knew the truth. He was their preacher at Sepulga Church while my father was still a member there. I remember that when I was with Papa one night and hearing Shears preach, I was in a mood to go up at the close and invitation to "join the church", as the common way of expression in use at the time. I almost did but somehow just almost, but did not. I must have been about ten years of age if this was in 1899. Papa had not left them then, but soon after did. After his leaving them, George came to see him and talked to him pleading for him to come back to them. Papa upheld his decision by reading the scriptures to George. Then finally I remember that the preacher agreed and said to Papa, "Bro. Mancil, I know the scripture says that, and in that, you are right, but we want you to come back to us anyway. We would receive you back and you could still believe like you do. We need you so badly. You have hurt our congregation so much by leaving. You could do so much more good with us and for us than you can with the few you are with." (There were only three families counting papa's then in the group of Christians at Herbert).

But Papa asked him, "Why don't you come with us into the New Testament church if you see we are right and with the scriptures?" I remember his response. He said, "Well I could not give up the pay I am getting from the Baptists to come with so small a group who could pay me only a very small amount; so I have to stay where I am." Soon he took his leave, choosing to remain in error rather than suffer the loss of income. So different was Moses' decision when he left Egypt to go with the people of God. (Heb. 11: 24-25). I remember other incidents in my father's religious experiences during this period of his life. Two more of which I will relate in this summary.

The first was while he was yet with the Baptists at Sepulga Church and still a deacon there. He met a young or middle aged man, a Civil War veteran and a former soldier in the Federal Army from Michigan. A preacher named David Coleman, the father of Maud Simon of Pensacola, Florida, and the grandfather of the late and well known Bro. Paul Simon, great grandfather of John Paul Simon, present missionary from Gateway, Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL to Brazil.

During the 1890's this Bro. Coleman came into our community at Herbert in Conecuh County, Alabama in the occupation of a circular mill-saw hammerer, i.e. - he hammered warped circular saws to take the warp out when warped by over heating. He got a job of hammering at Shaver Brothers Saw Mill at Herbert, and while there he preached one night at the school house upon the invitation of Doctor Shaver, who was also a veteran of the Civil War but of the Confederacy. As Dr. Shaver said, "He (Bro. Coleman) can whip the Mormon's", was the announcement made in the notice that he would preach at the school house this night of the long ago. Bro. Coleman met the challenge of the Mormon elder who was present and heard Bro. Coleman preach after his sermon on "The Establishment of the Kingdom of Christ." They did have a debate, and Bro. S.I.S. Cawthorn from Andalusia, Alabama, was his moderator. They both debated the Elder, and broke the Mormon influence in the community. This leads up to how Bro. Coleman happened into the home of my father Edmond Mancill. Three of my sisters Florence, Annie and Minnie went out to the school house walking two miles that memorable night and heard Bro. Coleman. After the sermon, they

invited him home with them to stay overnight. He was assigned to the guest room in our father's home, and the morning after found him by surprise at the breakfast table with their father.

This happened on a Friday night, and that Saturday was "Conference Day" at Sepulga Baptist Church; and my father, a deacon, of necessity must be there. So he told this to the new preacher and out of common courtesy invited Bro. Coleman to go along with him to his conference meeting, and Bro. Coleman went with Papa in the one horse wagon equipped with a spring wagon seat.

They got to the meeting house and waited for George, the preacher, who only, "According to Baptist Usage", could be moderator of their business meeting. But George for some unknown reason did not show up at all. After waiting for the preacher until they gave up, some one of the deacons present, (Turner, Hare, Jim and John Jones, Kelly with Mancil), said, "We might as well dismiss and go home; whereupon Bro. Mancil said, "I brought a Christian preacher as my guest along with me. Why don't we all stay and have him preach to us?" But objection by all others present said, "No, no, no. We cannot allow anyone but a Baptist preacher to preach in our building." To this my father, being an honest and unprejudiced man, responded thus, "If preaching the gospel of Christ in the building will do damage to it, we ought to tear it down this day." But to this they also said, "Oh no", and disbanded. Papa and the Christian preacher rode the two and onehalf miles back home in disappointment and loneliness.

The other incident I remember because I was present with all my father's family. The brethern at Sepulga were so upset at Ed Mancil and family for leaving the Baptist Church - "falling from grace", which they had been teaching was an impossibility - that they called for the president of the County Baptist Association to come and preach the doom of those who had left them, the whole Ed Mancil family. This was no less than the Honorable and Rev. Higdon. I was old enough then, about twelve years of age, to listen to this dignified orator. I sat with the family though I had not become a member of this Baptist church and could not be counted a deserter as were Father, Mother, Annie, Minnie and Honie. Florence was still a member of it at that time but left later. She was not present to hear Higdon that day.

I don't remember all he said about "Campbellites", but am sure it was aplenty and full of prejudice and malice. But his sarcasm in one statement made a lasting impression on my young mind which has stayed with me to my 87th. year and will not be erased from my mind until death, if from my memory, I can't now tell.

I remember he spoke about the name "Christian" found in Acts 11:26, and said this name was given to the Baptists in derision. Then he resorted to sarcasm and in a derogatory manner spake these words, "These folks who call themselves Christians", as if he detested them.

Here I begin my memory of my life under the family name inherited at birth.

My father spelled my given name thus Elyot Devosios Mancil. He had little schooling but learned to read better than he learned to spell. I obtained some education in both spelling and reading. He gave me every opportunity to go to school and become happy, (though he never did say so), that I had learned well because I had more time and opportunity than he. There were no schools in his time of childhood or young manhood.

He married about 1870 at about 16 or 18 when there were still no public schools in the south, in the rural sections. The only schooling he had was at worship meetings and on Sundays by some volunteer generous-hearted women who taught

the children in the church buildings. He had about the equivalent of three months of schooling; no reading, or spelling book. Their only reader was a New Testament or a song book in print without notes. I own one such song book.

MY BOYHOOD
1889 - 1909

I was born and grew up in Conecuh County, south central Alabama. My date of birth is September fourteen, eighteen hundred eighty-nine. My father's name was Edmond Mancil. He always signed his name E. Mancil and was called Ed Mancil by most who knew him; and "Papa" by his children. None of them ever called him "Daddy". This we would have thought disrespectful, no less than if we should have called our mother "Mammy". We addressed her as "Mama". Only "Papa" and "Mama" were acceptable to them. These we were taught to use and were happy; and only these did we always lovelingly pleased to use. Now days it is common and in disrespect to hear, too often, young people use, "My old man" and "My old woman" in reference to their fathers and mothers. They should have more respect toward parents.

My mother was Rosa Elvira Dillard born in Eufala, Barbour County, Alabama, in the year 1849. She and one sister were married in Alabama. Later her parents and their three brothers and two sisters moved to Tioge, Louisiana. She seldom saw any of them afterward. She made one trip only, that by railway and took only my sister Essie and me when we were young enough to go free fare. Her mother made two trips by railway back to Alabama to visit her two daughters. One sister, Jane, made two or three visits to my mother's. Only one brother Noah made a trip to visit her after being gone forty years. He came without writing and surprised her, walking into her kitchen. Then he approached her in the intent to embrace and kiss her. She drew back from him, an apparent stranger.

My father was a "one horse farmer". I began at an early age, my play days interrupted, to learn to work. The first picking cotton was play then, but I had a little "cotton sack" and could fill it in a short time and get bragged on for a reward. In a few short years this became work and a daily task, never done until the last open bowls were in the barn. I finally became quite a cotton picker; and when I was in my teens, I sometimes, but not every day, could pick 200 to 250 pounds. I also learned early in life to use a hoe. I became an expert "Hoe Hand". I disliked "chopping bushes", the sprouts that grew from the hardwood stumps left in the ground on the newly cleared "new ground". These stumps lived two to three years and had to be cut back with a hoe or else the stumps would never die and rot. But I liked to "chop cotton". Papa "barred off" the rows of young cotton plants with a "turn plow" on a "georgia stock". This left the plants on a narrow ridge easy to cut through and a furrow for the soil to fall into from the hoe. An acre of cotton was counted "seventy rows, seventy steps long", and this required incessant chopping to finish one acre in a day. A hired hand received $1.00 per acre for his work. I earned my first dollar, a solid silver one, by chopping one

acre in one day for a neighbor, Mr. Daniel McIntyre, in a swamp field infested with water grass. I was sixteen years old at the time, and this day in his cotton field near Sepulga River was done after I had just finished chopping my father's fifteen acre cotton field at home, and the first money I had earned. Earned is the right word, and money then was hard to come by. I was happy to get that silver dollar, "solid silver", and I tossed it up in the air catching it as it fell, over and over as I walked home barefoot for the mile between our homes. Would that I had it now, but could or did not keep it. It would probably be worth twenty or thirty of the copper and silver one's of the present day.

But this work on the farm does not tell all that took place in my boyhood days. All that happened to age sixteen and young manhood would make a big book. I will attempt to relate only some of the highlights, mostly good but many bad ones of this period.

I had the intervals, one in the summer after crops were layed by and one in the winter after harvest was all done. These periods after age seven were fortunate ones for me to attend our public schools, two months most summers and four months every winter. These were supported by public funds obtained by taxation, by state and county law for educational purposes. We had then as now a county superintendent of education and school districts of the county. The money was appropriated by him to the districts of the county. He selected and hired and paid the teachers.

SCHOOL DAYS AND RULE DAYS

When I became seven years old and began school, we had an unpainted building of rough sawn boards and board seats. No ceiling or walls or overhead. There in the Shaver, Harper, Murphy, Thomas, Mancill, MacIntyre rural farming community, there was for a long time only one store, and it was on the Shaver farm . Mr. George Harper was the only teacher for a long time. He was also a farmer. He only received small pay for teaching the school and depended mostly on farming to support his family. Dr. Shaver donated a piece of ground unfit for farming by a pond on which to build the first school house. I'll guess that was about 1880. Schools were used only part of the time, three months in the winter and two months in the summer. This was because the teacher and all the children were needed to help on the farms. Sometimes there was no money to pay a teacher, one of which was Miss Betty Shaver. Her father was a veteran of the Civil War. She offered to teach all children who could come for a month in the summer for one dollar for each pupil. Papa sent sister Essie and me and paid the cost. Miss Betsy, a life time maid, brought a story book from home about the early settlers and the Indians. She let me read from it, but I could not take it home. I read it so well and with so much interest she praised me and said I was a special boy. She had to stop me to help others.

Mr. George Harper was our regular and long time teacher. He taught reading, spelling, geography, history and arithmetic. Later some of our better teachers taught physiology, grammar, health, hygiene and even agriculture. They also taught first year Latin. When I brought a note from my teacher for a book on agriculture,

my father said I did not need a book on farming, for I knew all I needed to know about this. I could drop corn by hand, could "put out" fertilizer, chop and hoe cotton and peanuts, set out sweet potatoes and, in fact, all the farm work except plowing, and he knew how to do that; but he bought me the book anyway. Then he read it, too, when I would bring it home. He laughed when he read in it how to uproot weeds in the garden with a "spud", and the book told how to make the spud like a paddle out of wood. The operator would have to stoop or sit on the ground to use it. I even read the book entitled, "Joe, the Book Farmer". That told about making as much as fifty bushels of corn on one acre by hauling leaves and straw, spreading them to one foot in thickness and then plow this all under for "humus", he called it. Papa got his "humus" out of the new book on agriculture. I had done well, I thought, when I had covered the mule stall to one foot in depth with leaves and pine straw needles. Our average yield then in Alabama was seventeen bushels of corn or a half bale of cotton for an acre.

We finally, by 1900 or up to 1907, had a few college trained teachers who could teach algebra, geometry, Latin composition and rhetoric, physical geography and physics. These were high school subjects, but our school was never high enough to be called "high", because two teachers with four grades each was the best and most we had. But before I left the rural two teacher school, I had mastered all these "studies" or subjects and added a reading of the best, but not the most, of English and American literature, both prose and poetry; and had read Shakespear's complete works. And in addition to this, I read all of the New Testament and most of the Old Testament. I also read United States and Alabama history as well as ancient and medieval history, but I only retained a smattering of any of this.

Our school, for the first school years was a one room, one teacher school where the enrollment was usually about twenty to forty, sometimes over. Some schools had as many as six to eight grades. Praise was due but seldom given to these deserving teachers for their ability to handle, discipline and teach all these grades and all these pupils. We had some efficient and fairly trained teachers, but, as might be expected, some were not so qualified. It was a matter of make do with those committed and available. Their salaries were meager in general and the over-all responsibilities difficult. However, diligent pupils could get schooling to meet the needs of the time.

I had a pleasant experience and have no complaints about the opportunities I had and made a fair use of them. I always liked to go to school because there was some time for play and we learned much by playing as well as by studying. Among our games was "Town Ball", the forerunner of baseball. Then there was "one eyed" and "two eyed" catch. These were ball games, pitching, throwing, catching and running the bases. Eventually we had baseball, but in even this we had only home-made balls and bats - none but the catcher used a mitt. We had no leather covered balls, except ones we covered with old shoe leather. We sewed it on by hand.

We also had a game we called base. This was all running, overtaking, catching up and tagging. This developed a rivalry in who could out run. We became fast runners, most always bare footed. If we wore shoes, we usually took them off for the game.

Another game we enjoyed was "pop the ship", or as we called it, "sling tail". All who wanted to play joined hands in a line, and the leaders, all running together in a line all facing one way. When they were going quite briskly, would make a sharp turn and reverse the direction so that when the tail end of the line

reached the bend, all holding on tightly would swing the end, the last one or two so swiftly they were not able to stay up. They would almost be air borne and could be slung so hard their hand hold would be broken and they might be slung some distance. This was the final fun to see if one might be sent tumbling or rolling on the ground. Then the process was to be repeated.

The teacher, at the end of each play period, rang her large hand brass bell. The children all lined up to re-enter the school room for resumption of study and recessitation. This consisted of a line up for spelling orally the words of that day's lesson. When a word was pronounced by the teacher to one after another in the line, if one pupil misspelled it, the next in line had a turn to spell it. If he did and spelled the word correctly, this pupil passed up the line above the one who had missed the word and so advanced toward the head of the class. Sometimes a word might pass from one to another and several would misspell it; in which case, the one who could spell it correctly would go beyond all who had missed it. This once happened for me, and I turned down seven pupils on the word A L M A N A C. I went almost from the foot to the head of the class. We had to spell syllable by syllable pronouncing the word up to each syllable from first to last. So that in a word consisting of a number of syllables like, for illustration, the words were sometimes a long one as: incompatibility. It went like this, (in) in; (com) incom; (pat) incompat; (i) incompati; (bil) incompatibil; (i) incompatibili; (ty) incompatibility. Each syllable was spelled separately and all the preceding syllables were pronounced up to the next. Then the next syllable was added until the word was completed and the whole word was finished and pronounced in its entirity. This was Websters Blue Back Spelling Book, which began with the alphabet, then phonics and pronunciation, emphasizing the right syllables. The lessons from beginning were in order of the vowels which rhymed as bay, hay, say, way, beginning with two letter words, then three letter words and so on to a "mile post" we called "Baker". Until in the end we had eight to ten syllable words. So when a pupil finished in this book, he was a proficient speller and could also correctly pronounce most words of the English language. English grammar was also helpful in learning use of words and their meanings.

I remember one humorous incident with a backward boy being taught the ABCs. The teacher drilled him by rote, having him to repeat over from a, as far as p. When he got to p he would stop. He continued to stop at p, until her patience gave out, when in a loud voice to emphasize she said, "P, Tommie", and everyone in the room burst out laughing. Her face lit up a noticable pink.

In another such humorous incident, the teacher gave out the word "guitar" to Georganna Hudson. She spelled it out loudly g-i-t, git; t-h-a-r, and could not pronounce it, when she hesitated the teacher, Mr. George Harper, then proposed to help her; and so he said, "Git-thar Georganna", she repeated loudly "git thar" and everyone laughed out.

It wasn't funny once, when he hit me on the head with his pencil because I couldn't show inflection in my reading of a little rhyme in my reader, this was the rhyme of Pet Pry shooting a fly;

Pet Pry shot a fly,
The fly went up, up, UP
To the sky.

I just let the fly go up, up, up -without inflection. He said to me, Elliott say it this way up! up! UP! but I continued to read it, saying up, up, up in monotone--then he cracked me on the head with his pencil.

He walked with a limp, one leg shorter than the other and he could not get across the room quickly so, once he got provoked at some misbehavior and let fly a stump of a switch as big as a thumb across the room at the misbehaving boy. It didn't hit him but went all the way to the wall. Anyway quiet prevailed for awhile.

When summer came in my boyhood I enjoyed, as all boys do, roaming the woods, swimming in the mill pond, fishing in the river. Climbing trees to the tops and the last branches. One time roaming along the bank of Sepulga River alone, two miles from home, I came upon a long piece of inch and a half (grass) hemp cable tied to a tree trunk. Evidently some raftsmen had tied up a raft of timber which had broken loose when the river was swollen. This was near a shoals where the river had a rock bottom and when swollen there were rapids. I untied the cable from around the tree, rolled it into a roll, carried it the two miles home. I selected an oak tree with a horizontal limb some 12 or 14 feet above the ground and climbed it with the end of the cable and there I made me a swing. I really had a happy time many hours over several years in this wonderful swing. Every hour I was not working I spent in this swing, standing and "pumping" myself up so high I could cause the rope to slack when at the highest point.

I was a long time learning to swim, just after I learned, my older brother took me with him to the river to go swimming. I had learned in the mill pond and was not familiar with a current in the river. He swam alone to the opposite side and coaxed me to swim over to him. I made it over very well but it tired me some, before resting he told me to swim back across while he waited and watched me. I got near the farther bank, was almost exhausted, so thought to let my feet down to bottom. I happened to stand down on a sunken log, slick with moss and slime, it was nearly neck deep and the water bouyed me up so I had little weight on my feet. The current bore me along to the end of the log and when my feet slipped off the end I went under. I came up O.K. and tried the same process over. It did not occur to my mind to use this waining energy to swim on to the bank which would have been easier than back against the current. I landed again on the same log thinking this my only hope. The same happened as at first and down I went under the second time. In desperation I fought the current the second time and the same was done again. The last time I went under would have been the end for me. I called "help", my brother was on his way over to rescue me and did. He got me to shore and out of the water but I was too weak to stand on my feet, so crumpled down completely exhausted. I learned better than to go swimming in the river alone and so I never did. But for my brother there with me my life would have ended that day in my boyhood. Thank God I lived to save my younger and deaf brother from drowning also one other deaf boy, Willie McClean, and another boy friend my own age, Hubert Hyde.

We had to improvise our own entertainment when I was a boy. We courted ideas and actions to make fun, so when boys met up we set to thinking up things we could do to have fun. This was not difficult to devise and I was adept at this. It always had to be at the expense of other boys, men, animals or whatever we were familiar with. I never tried or intended to do violence, to harm others, but I was not always successful in this, and now feel ashamed of many or most all the pranks I played or devised upon others or other animals. I was not as bad as Pecks' Bad Boy but I can not say I was always a good boy. I must have some strain of Irish in my heritage for I was given to amusement.

I was just an average country boy and had many boyhood friends. A Baptist preacher who had three sons lived near our home. The middle one, named Charlie was

about my age but a year or two younger. I could lead into safety when we climbed trees or into difficult situations. I got him into one of the latter with no planned or premeditated purpose. Here is how it came about.

When my parents were away from home on one occasion I was left alone. So down to Charlie Clayton's home I went for companionship. Too many home folks were there that Saturday afternoon so I asked his mother to let him go home with me up to my house for the afternoon. She did. We could be free to have fun together.

We went into Mammas kitchen for some homemade cookies. Our tom cat was peacefully lying under the wood cookstove, his favorite place summer and winter. There was no screen door to keep him or the flies out. So a first thought came to mind and I shut the kitchen and the dining room doors.

I knew he was skittish, I had taught him to be. He was wise to me and I knew to catch him I would have to shut the door. I could not even "kitty him up" to catch him for he had some former experiences with us boys, Ernest and I. So I knew I would have to hem him up in a corner and tried to do this, but there was a work table in the corner and shelves on the wall. The kitchen wall was not sealed, but the back porch had ceiling overhead and the loft it formed was his regular retreat when he heard Ernest or me hit the first door step. I told Charlie we would have to tip toe in and shut the door behind us. It worked, but up on the table and shelves, he escaped into the loft. He only thought he was safe up there in the dark, for I ascended behind him. He was where I could corner him now. I was careful not to excite him, but creeped upon him quietly and with a kindly, kitty!, kitty!, kitty! he humbled down and let me pet him and arm him up. I crawled back to the kitchen corner, the only place I could get back up into the loft. Charlie was on the floor so I told him, "I will drop the cat to the floor and you must catch him, pet him up, sit down in a chair and keep him, pet him and not let him go, while I get down."

My next move was to go to the corn crib in the horse lot and get a corn shuck and find a string. On returning to the kitchen I had another thought, "What if the cat gets excited when he sees me in the door with a shuck in my hand"? Also I thought about Charlie, "What will he do if the cat gets excited?" Well, to find out how the situation would turn out, I "accidentally" scrapped the shuck on the door casing and called to Charlie, "Hold him!, Hold him!" I knew he couldn't and that he wouldn't, and he didn't, but he tried. I knew all the time what was sure to happen but it would be worth following the cat back into the attic. This was my fun not Charlie's. I expressed surprise and said to Charlie, "Why didn't you hold him", astonishment and disgust, saying, "Now I'll have to go back up and get the cat again." I did but I turned pittiful and merciful, hypocritical all in one. I left the shuck in the kitchen while I repeated my climb into the loft again, and back to the corner with old tom. This time I was truly kind to Charlie, maybe I repented in a measure, but not enough to persuade Charlie to catch him again. I didn't ask Charlie if the cat had scratched him, I didn't need to ask that silly question. Anyway I relented and dropped the cat down again and Charlie continued to cooperate until I climbed back down gently, got the shuck, being careful not to let it make any noise while I tied it securely to the cat's tail, turning back some hair into the knot, so it would not "come off".

Now, to give the cat more space to run I said come on Charlie, let's take him way down into the pecan orchard before I turn him loose. I wanted Charlie to have his share in the fun now. He had not had much up to this point. The next act was mainly for him, I had had the principal part of the fun. The scene that followed

was enough to make a somber boy laugh, for it was one of the cat and the shuck up and over the row of pea vines for a hundred yards to the house and through the slats in the picket yard fence, where to my disappointment he lost the shuck.

Needless to say, I did not relate this to anyone and hoped Charlie would not tell his mamma about it, and evidently he didn't, for had he done so it would have wound up in a way I could not have laughed it off with any enjoyment. Boys have a way of getting out of a lot of punishment they deserve but fail to get.

I got a lot of favors in my boyhood that I did not deserve, one was from Charlie's older sister. I caught a ("gopher") land tortoise, a burrowing animal, and I wanted it cooked, but my mother did not have the experience to butcher and cook it, so she declined and told me to take it down to Clayton's and give it to them. "Bro. Clayton", (all our family down to my age were Baptists, too) did not raise hogs or even have a milk cow, maybe they would like this meaty animal. My father was not a Jew or a Seventh Day Adventist, but he never would eat "unclean" animals nor even some, as the goat, that were "clean". No o'possum, no coon, no goat, no gopher. I was curious to see why. So when I gave the gopher to the Clayton's I ask them to save me some. They did, but they had no experience either, butchering or cooking gopher. So when they brought me some "gopher and dumplings", there was a front leg with gopher toe nails sticking up above the dumplings. I was game anyway and not even this phased me. I tried it and found no fault but skipped the toe nail piece.

I got into a lot of trouble and mischief as most boys do with a slingshot, bow and arrow, and a near death of my sister Essie with a 22 rifle. I regret now and am really ashamed of and have truly repented of my many mis-deeds. Many times it was pure mischief, sometimes real meanness, then again it was unplanned, unintended, but these excuses don't change the realities. Always I knew what I was doing was wrong. I even lied at times, not being as discreet as George was reported being, in the case of the Cherry Tree, but when I was cornered I could and would tell the truth.

I made my own slingshots, my own bows and arrows but I bought a 22 rifle in my early teens. The worse thing I ever did with a sling shot was done with a boy companion. There was an abandoned house, dilapidated and never to be lived in again. It had glass windows and most of the panes still in the sash were still good and salvagable but we "took a notion" to see how many panes we could crack with our sling shots, being together we were more daring, though we knew it was wrong. We proceeded to make havoc of them. I don't remember that we left any at all whole. This surely borders or actually falls under vandalism, but I'm sure we would not have done this to a home where people were living or ever could have lived.

The arrow incident, two of them, but I will relate only one. I had made me a hickory bow, a good twisted and waxed bow string, and some really dangerous arrows from a discarded parasol. The ribs were of solid steel with i's for the wire at the top also flattened i's for sewing on the cover at the bottom. By filing it off at the center of the botton i's, it made a fork for my bow string. The other end I filed to a sharp point. I could drive an arrow into a board on the crib, it would almost go through a 3/4 quarter inch board, and wave and sing (vibrate) swinging from the board. The incident occurred when once I had left the corn crib door open and of course the floor was covered as usual with shattered grains of corn. The chickens found it open and I happened to go into the horse lot having my bow and arrow along. I "shooed" the chickens out, they flew by me or over my head, all but a few of them. I set a steel arrow on my bow and string, drew it back and let fly

at a frying sized rooster, did not purpose to hit, nor took aim but the arrow went through him, half of it on each side of the fryer. I knew he would not live so I proceeded to pull its head off.

Mamma was conservative with her few fryers and reserved them for the preachers or for other "company". So I had to frame up some "tale to tell". I said to her when I took it to the house with the arrow out and its head off, "I found it in the lot where the horse was and I guess the horse must have stepped on its head. The urgency of the situation, to have to dress it, I said "It is still warm and it bled when I pulled its head off", so she took it to scald, and undress and draw it, too occupied to ask me any questions. Papa would have known a horse would have no chance to step on a chickens head, the chicken would move its head, they usually step on a chicken's foot. Lucky for me he was not there to hear my "flemsy tale".

Another time I was at my sister's home and she sent me one afternoon to bring her cows from the pasture corn field in the fall. Again I had my sling shot along. I didn't know I would find a bunch of her geese in the field with the cows but they (the geese) had a hissing gander with them. This gander was a watchman for his flock and he resented me getting near them. He came at me with his neck way out in front to intimidate me, warning with an open beak and a sizzling hiss. He just ought not to have done this, so I put a rock from my pocket into my sling, drew it way back and knocked the skin off his head. It began to bleed and he was addled and I became uneasy that he would die anyway and decided I could carry him away off for the buzzards so I grabbed him up, took him by the head, set my foot on his neck and strained to pull his head off. It failed to give, he must have tightened the ligiments in his neck so the head did not budge. Then I let go of his head, took my foot off his neck, the gander got up and wabbled away. I gave up and he joined his harem but his clucking was not daring to me anymore. He lived and was all happy the next afternoon when I went again for her cows. I kept this a secret from her and the gander could not ever tell what happened to him. He lived happily ever after and I went on my way rejoicing. No harm done just experience for me and for him not ever to forget. He may have forgotten but I haven't. I had learned a lesson and changed my mind toward ganders and tom turkeys. I learned a lesson tho from one of my sisters' tom turkeys when once at her home, her tom jumped into my chest with both feet and beat me in the face with both wings. I have since respected tom turkeys in strutting time. I repented and am glad, I am told in the book to forgive but am glad the book doesn't tell me to forget; something few can do as long as memory lasts. I also learned and by experience in my boyhood to refrain from doing things my father had told me not to do, or if I did and he learned of it, I then found it best to tell him the truth if he asked me. Two instances were sufficient. One, was when he told me to wear my shoes to school. The first time he passed the school house with his horse and wagon at recess time he saw me playing on the school ground bare footed. He called me out to the road and asked me where my shoes were. I told him that I took them off and hid them by the road in the woods on my way to school that morning. "Well then", said he, "Go now and get them and keep them on." I did, but I walked a mile there and a mile back and lost my noon hour.

On another occasion, I asked him on a Sunday morning, (we did not have school on Sunday, not even "Sunday School") if I could go spend the day with one of my favorite boy friends, Wilbert McIntyre. He lived within one mile of Sepulga river. A whole bunch of the neighbor boys took Sunday together to play and to swim in the river, sometimes all day. He knew this was my purpose for wanting to go. He must

have wanted to try me. To see if I had learned to mind him else he never should have said to me as he did, "Yes you may go to his home to play but don't go in the river". He never tried to emphasize things he told me to do or not to do. Going swimming was our favorite sport. I didn't tell him I would not go. If I had, that would have been a lie. I just said "yes sir", I thought maybe he would forget that he told me this or at least I hoped he would. Vain hope!

So when I got to Wilbert's all the boys were there and had almost decided to go on without me. I told them what papa said. They said, "Oh, come on with us anyway, he won't find it out and we won't tell on you". I was easy enough to be persuaded. I went. I thought then that I could at least go to the river with them and not go in. So I told them that this was what he said, then they went in without me. They knew I would not sit there in the sun all day, but I tried to resist. They got to having barrels of fun and I was getting hotter all the time. This is too much of a temptation for any boy, not to mention me, who loved swimming above anything I then knew about. You don't need to read on. I went in and that for hours.

When I got back home at nearly sundown, the very first thing he asked me was:

Papa: "Did you go to the river?"
I: "All the other boys went."
Papa: "But did you go."
I: "Yes, I didn't want to be left alone."
Papa: "But did you go in (into) the river?"
I: "All the other boys went swimming."
Papa: "Did you sit there on the bank all day."

I had to confess or tell him a lie, yes I went in "A little while", trying to soften him up some. He knew this was a part truth, but he would not relent, so he asked me "How long is a little while, and why weren't you back home sooner." This fixed me, I was at his mercy, and thankful I was that he had mercy. Without me asking for his mercy I came clear with him and told him frankly that I stayed in as long as they did which was most of the day. His questioning and unrelenting inquisition converted me, and was the lesson I needed. This, if I remember was the nearest I came to having him thrash me, which I'm sure he would have done if he had not found I was truthful and honest, not deceiving him. Like Abraham in Egypt, I tried to get by with a half truth but it did not work for him and he learned a lesson the hard way. It did not work for me and it helped to mold my character. I never made any attempt after these events to deceive my parents, only to keep my secrets when I could. Sometimes this failed. I feel a duty just here to relate perhaps the last serious mistake I made which worked out in the end to keep me from going down into what could have turned out for me to become an alcoholic, and how I overcame and avoided such a downfall. I relate this to help immature young men avoid the dangerous pitfall.

I now feel ashamed even to relate this incident in my immature life and the influence my older brother four years older than I had on my immature years. He grew up with an older set of young men, and formed the habit (a bad habit) of using tobacco, he "chewed" it to his last days. He tried everyway to use it and I did try too, but fortunately for me my system would never accept it, tho I tried it in every form. I always got sick and vomited everytime. He got me to slip it by the plug for him since our mother used it and always kept it by the 10lb. "caddy". Doctors in those days told parents to let their children chew tobacco. They knew of no other remedy for worms in childrens digestive system. Many people formed this habit in this way. Some encouraged rather than discouraged their children in

the use of it. My brother would cut off a bit of the plug and give me a time to chew it. Then laugh at me when I got sick. This was bad enough but not the worst habit in his young manhood days, for he began to drink strong whiskey with some of his young friends. It is to his credit that tho he started out on this dangerous habit, later he gave it up after he was married and never drank anymore.

The laws of Alabama in the latter part of the 18th century allowed adults to order whiskey from distileries in other states, but only for their own use, and to sell it to anyone was a violation, yet it was commonly done. It was shipped by express in wooden cases of a dozen quart glass bottles.

My brother, yet in his teens ordered a case, maybe only one time, and he also sold some of it. I knew about this but told no one. He kept it hid in the woods near our home but I didn't know just where. He never took me where it was but when I must have been in my early teens he planned on a Saturday afternoon to go to the river fishing and took me with him. I often went fishing with him but this was my first experience drinking this poison. I did not know until he took me through the woods that he had the whiskey and he got a quart of it and before we got far from home he opened it. He was prepared for he had a cork screw. (A cork screw was included with the order.) This was the first time I had seen a bottle of it opened.

He turned it up, drank from the bottle a real liberal "swig" and insisted that I do the same. Because of my inexperience and boyhood weakness, I did, though I knew it was wrong and that our parents should not know or learn of our doings.

He drank more of it on the spot and got me to take more. It made me so drunk in just a short time. We got by the old mill and a quarter mile beyond and I was so sick I got down in the road in a sand bed and I was "swimming," I said in the water, there was no water there. I was fortunate to vomit the most of it before my blood stream absorbed it all, anyway after vomiting it up, I was able to walk on to the river on a woods road. When we got near the river I got down again and lay under some bushes in the shade; while he and a black boy friend, who was to go with us, overtook us on the road and together they left me "out" in the shade and they went on down the 30 ft. high bluff to the river's edge. It was good the black boy was with us and that none of the quart of whiskey was left for him. My brother had drunk all of it except, maybe a cup full I had swallowed. The black boy was older than I and younger than my brother and as I learned later had bought a quart of the whiskey from my brother, but he couldn't slip it away from home without his parents finding out, so fortunately he had not brought it. He kept my brother from going into the water at the mouth of the Mancill Mill Creek where it empties into the Sepulga River. It is 20 or 25 feet deep there. My brother was too drunk by then to know any danger, so he owes his life to this friend.

I had slept unconcious several hours before they came and roused me up to walk two miles home. It was after dark and bed time when we got home. I had recovered by then enough to go to bed and the next morning was able to go to breakfast. I'll never know how this remained a secret from our parents, but this writing is the first report of it to my knowledge.

This was a first experience for me and should have been enough, but I continued to take small drinks with drinking friends until I got into trouble a year or two later.

This incident was my last and final drinking. I was at a party on a Saturday night in another near by community. I must have been fifteen by then. Most of the boys or the young men had flasks of the poison and drank some at most all the

parties. The drinking was always outside in the dark. I was never at a party where it was served to the guests in the homes or public places. On this occasion a cousin of mine, Andy Liles, was there and outside sitting in his buggy with the horse in the shafts. I walked up between the wheels to speak to him and first thing he offered me a drink of whiskey from the bottle he had. I was weak enough to yield at this time and took only a little of the stuff. I never learned to like or want it. Just then a boy I knew walked up to the buggy and Andy told me to make him get away. I told the boy to leave, but he resented me telling him, and told me to make him leave if I could do that, so I must have wanted to show off and I pushed him shoving him to the ground. He was smaller than I and showed no "fight", but without saying anything to me he went to his older brother and told him what had happened. He was enough larger and stronger than I. He took me by the arm and took me aside. I made no resistance and tried to apologize to him, but this did not satisfy him so he proceeded to "cuss me out" using the worst language ever to taint the lips of man. I took the cussing as much as I detested it, I let him say all he could and wanted to. His purpose was to get me to strike him, but I knew not to for he would have beat my face in. This was one time I held my tongue and withheld any resistance whatever. His cursing did him more harm than it did me, really it was good for me to be rebuked.

The report of this reached my father and mother and my dear mother's words to me as I stood guilty before her, were only these, "Elliott, I never thought that you would ever do such as this".

My reply was a promise to her and to God that I have kept and will keep to the end of life. I said to her in papa's hearing, "Mamma, you will never hear of anything like this again" and I meant it.

My last experience after this incident happened a year or two later when one of my closest friends Clifford Shaver asked me to walk with him one night. I didn't ask him what he had in mind but after about a mile we turned into a lane off the main road. He stopped, took out a full quart of whiskey, produced a cork screw from his pocket, opened it and said "Elliott this is a full quart, let us have a "Swig" of it together."

Then and there I remembered (my promise to my mother and the voice still rang in my ears so my only reply was), "Clifford, I have my mind made up never to take another drink of whiskey. You drink what you wish and put the cork back in the bottle." This promise was 67 years ago and still holding to the count down, to zero.

I am ashamed to say that I drank some in my young days and after I obeyed the gospel of Christ. But I found the place for repentence and I know I have been forgiven. I confessed my sin, not that I had sinned but my sins (what I had done) to my mother and to my heavenly Father and 1 John 1:7-10 still holds good. I have since been a total abstainer.

I have bought and paid for only one half pint of whiskey and that was sent to me by Dr. Abrecumbie of Peatry in Chrenshaw Co. when I was recuperating from a bout of two weeks with pneumonia and I could have wisely refused to use it even for "toddy". Really all I needed was rest and food. The doctor charged that half pint on my bill at the drug store, what I did drink (I'm ashamed to admit that) was given to me on invitation from the giver. I never did ask for any that I drank. The first drink is the fatal one, the last one is the only one to be thankful for, not indeed, thankful for that one, but thankful only that it was the last one. I fully believe in the complete safety of being a "tee-totaler." My conclusive

advice to all is to "abstain from every appearance of evil" and keep oneself unspotted from the world.

I wouldn't for the world tempt any man with as much as Paul advised Timothy. But advise all to drink only what God has made in it's natural state such as water, milk and fruit juices known to be free of poison. For years I have abstained from coffee, tea, carbonated drinks. Ice is the only addative to be used in any drink, sometimes doctors in some cases tell their patients with heart conditions not to drink water hot or cold but at a normal temperature.

Many other things did I do which were wrong. The only reason now for writing of some of them (not all) is that it may be a warning to other young men, with the advice from me, to avoid them.

Two of these are in reference to stealing, only a plan to steal, but abandoned. I relate this one first. Once while I was a clerk at the country store in 1908. Late one afternoon about the going down of the sun, my neighbor clerk, Clifford Shaver, who kept the Shaver general store and the Herbert Post Office across the road from my store, walked over to my porch. One boy was with him and another was with me on the "whittling bench" on my porch. Some of them, not I, proposed we go after night to a neighbors watermelon patch not far away, said his melons were ripe and it would be a good time to try one. So we all, including myself, agreed to go after supper and were to meet at my store. Not one minute later a very unusual event occurred.

My porch was the width of the store and about 3 1/2 feet above the ground at the store floor level, and about 5 1/2 or 6 feet wide with a set of steps at each end. None of us had ever witnessed anything similar to the unusual occurrence of that moment. It was to us a thing to doubt as ever occurring since the day of Noah and his dove with the glad news that land was in evidence at the receeding of the flood. To our amazement and our consternation there and then was a Noah's turtle dove just arrived by wings and it alighted right in front of all of us on the edge of that porch, two of us seated on the bench, the other two standing on the ground, leaning on the edge of the porch not three feet from that dove. It stayed long enough to eye all of us, (those little black eyes were piercing). The dove was on the side of the porch toward the direction of the watermelon patch we had conspired to invade that night together. When it rose on wing it flew straight up that road at a low elevation, as if to say, "follow me."

We four young men, dazed and speechless for a full minute, stared at each other in amazement. I broke the silence with these words, "Boys you may go on this venture if you wish but I'm not going." This ended completely our evil conspiracy. This was my experience not Noah's, this was Mancill's dove, not Noah's. Noah's dove brought him good news. My dove brought me wholesome advice and I interpreted it in my words not Noah's, not a word from the dove, but it was as plain as daylight to me, and to me it said, "Don't go."

I have thought of this incident many times and have told it occasionally since. When I could find a listener. I have thought many times of what could or might have happened to me or to anyone of us, but for that one precious little dove. I had not sent for it as Noah sent his out, once to return, again. (My dove did not need to return I got the message I needed.)

I think often that God must have sent this dove and I need not wait for it to return. I went to bed and to sleep that night and many, many, many nights since. But for that dove that could have been my last night, for all four of us knew well the owner we thought to divest of one watermelon. He was of a highly volative character and we knew well that if he should be on watch with a shotgun he had just

such an attitude to kill any intruder on his rights. I have never regretted my change of mind. Unlike the one son of the two in Christ's illustration, "I repented and did not go" I am sure it was well.

I am like the most of us, I do have a grain of "superstition", I call it a grain of "Wisdom". It certainly is not foolishness. My father had often asked his sons not to kill a dove. He quoted from Jesus' lips, "Be ye as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves". A good admonition.

He had a deep down reason because of a similar incident on his mother's farm during his boyhood. I will retell this while on the subject of doves.

He told few things relative to his past life or of his boyhood but related this one several times. I tell now to his credit, as he told it to me.

His oldest brother Calvin, at age 16 was conscripted into the Confederate Army the last year of the Civil War. He had finished his military training, short it was, but the war ended that year and he came back home to his widowed mother and the four younger brothers and resumed his work on their one horse farm. He had been her main plowhand.

It chanced to happen one day not long after he returned home in the evening from a day of plowing that he told all of them of a strange incident that day in the field; a dove had flown and lit on his hand as he walked and held the plowhandle. He said it looked up and seeing him flew directly to the site of his fathers grave and lit in a small cedar tree his mother had set out by the grave about 200 yards from their log cabin. No more was said of this for sometime but the same year he took sick and his sickness was fatal and a grave was dug for him by his fathers grave; another blow to a Godly mother who had struggled through six years of the Civil War and now faced the bitter poverty of the years that followed with four smaller sons.

Another bird, a bigger one, had to do with a trip to a watermelon patch of our neighbor, Mr. Kelly, with my older brother. He told me and I believed him, that Mr. Jerry Kelly had told him he could get a melon out of his patch anytime he wanted one, so one night he happened to "want one" but also wanted me to go with him. I did not hesitate or even think, boy that I was, why he should want a hot watermelon at night instead of on a nice cool morning when the dew would be on it. And why go after supper, not being hungry, or why after our father had read a chapter in the Bible as he did every night and had prayed the Lord to "keep our dear ones from harm and evil". I couldn't help and I now remember my conscience was hesitating somewhat as we walked in the dark through our shaded and dark pecan orchard, climbed our fence, crossed the lane, climbed the Kelly fence into his cornfield, crossed the corn rows down to a "new ground", close to the dense forest in the low ground outside the border of his farm. We knew where watermelon patches were and where all the new ground patches of land were, next to the outlying dense forest.

"To make a long story short", we soon selected a fine melon, too big for me to carry but not for him. Stumps were always left in the newly cleared land and one was handy. My brother burst the melon, raising and bumping it on the stump and we were eagerly digging in with our hands, the juice dripping from mouths and hands. All of a sudden and in the still and silent night, a shrill scream, Yeow! Yeow! Yeow! long drawn out. Brother said, "Thats a wild cat". We left stump with the melon on it and turned to run and the screamer reached the "Who - Whoo - are you". Anyway we didn't have the courage to return to the melon and were glad to go to the house and to bed. God must have providentially caused that Hoot Owl to scream, in

answer to our father's "effectual fervent PRAYER". Needless to say we didn't tell anyone, even Mr. Kelly, why there was a partly devoured melon on or by a stump in his patch. He probably found tracks but so far as I know no mention was ever made of what he found. Boys in those days would rather go to what was called a "water melon cutting". It was the same way with peanuts and sugar cane on 'possum and coon hunting nights of the long ago. Endless would it be to try to tell all that came to pass in our boyhood days.

THE HEADLESS GHOST

There are two other experiences of the growing up period I have been requested by my grandson, to write an account of in this memoir. I do feel reluctant to relate them at all, for they turned out to be much more unpleasant and serious than was anticipated. These were real occurrences but I will not use the real names of the characters except that of myself. I will just say of them - they were young men, all of us friends, acquaintances living near one another in our home community. In the first the characters were myself - the main instigator, one close associate a young man my age, the several other characters were girls and young ladies some my age, some younger, two as old as 20 years and sisters, two were my cousins.

A trip to a deserted cemetery, unkept and surrounded by forest, briers, bushes with only an unused path to it. The cemetery bare the name of the two older adult girls' Surname (Sowell Cemetery). Where their ancestors and family members had been buried. There was no fence around it but rail fence ran along the road a quarter mile or so from this site.

My friend, Hubert Hyde, and I went to my Uncle's home where about seven or eight girls were visiting together and while there on that Sunday afternoon, we heard them plan a walk together to this site about a mile away. So I thought of a plan, too, and told my plan to one of the girls, my cousin Estell and had her promise to keep it secret from all the others.

My plan was to leave, excusing myself and boy companion, go on ahead of them and be in the cemetery before they arrived. I told him about my plan, on our way, after leaving.

We got to it in plenty time, really a long time ahead of them. After arriving there, looking over the surroundings and laying plans to surprise them. There was one grave site with a shelter, a roof on posts, and pickets around to enclose it. My first plan was to get up over the graves under the roof for concealment. I tried this but found I could not hide, there was no support. I had in mind there to drop down out of the roof. I gave up this arrangement, looking around I found an ideal place for concealment. One grave was surrounded by a board pen on the ground, two 12 inch boards one over the other nailed to corner pieces. I suggested to him that we lie down flat on the ground, one on each side of the grave on the inside of the pen. The crack between these two boards furnished ideal vision for us to look outside. So I further devised to arrange for an object to show them without showing ourselves. I cut down two bushes, trimmed up the stems in 3 feet

lengths, took off my coat, buttoned it up in front, and inserted the two sticks inside up to the shoulders. I got into position on one side of the grave and with the one end of a stick in each hand, laid the coat down on my back, ready to raise it up at the proper time. We waited in silence and concealment for their arrival. We thought they might give up and not come, if the one girl who knew of us being there should tell them about us. Anyway we waited it seemed for an hour.

Finally we saw them climbing the rail fence at the road and taking the woods road that passes closer to the cemetery, until they reached a dim trail from this road to the expected goal. They were strung out in a long line on this trail, the two adult girls in the lead. It was to them, "Our old Cemetery", and they knew best where it was and how to get to it. Two of the girls were my cousins, the oldest one my age and in on the secret. There was another two sisters in the group, one of them "big and fat", really too stout to travel like she soon would want to. There names were Maggie and Samanthy Hooks.

To their great hindrance the path was beset with long curving thorny berry vines, and the two lead girls were wearing the long dresses shoe top length befitting their age, also bonnets on their heads with strings tied under the chin. All were keeping up a continual this and that, one to another, about what a time it was to get through "all these bushes and briars" and with some "Oh me's" and "Oh my's". They seemed to us to be making slow and difficult progress.

At last the two lead girls broke through the forrest confines into the open site, and were within 10 feet of our pen. With me it was now or never, I dare not wait for them to assemble around this first grave and get into a lament for the dead, so I slowly began raising the coat up from inside the pen and to attract the attention of all, especially the hindermost down the line on the trail, I began a rather loud and very grusome, indescribable noise, wordless but wierd - as if from the other world. A noise of groaning and suffering the agony of the unknown and unseen. No sooner than seen and heard there was a wheeling all down the line. The forward two, really grown young women, jerked off their bonnets, grabbed up a handful of skirts and screamed and wheeled. It was a quick start and, as fast as they could make a getaway. They didn't have to yell "make room", for each one was putting room behind and taking it up in front.

There were screams but not caused by briers, nothing impeded their flight not even the one who knew the plot could get their attention. In vain did she yell, "It's Elliott, It's Elliott. None heard and none heeded, the slower ones were by-passed and the slowest brought up the rear. This was fat Maggie.

We got up out of the pen, no one saw us. They had no hind sights. Poor stout girl! What a sight trying so much to keep up, jogging along last. We followed but none stopped, even when we called out, "Stop! Wait, it's us". None looked back to see who US was. The lead girls, who had the shortest to go, until they almost bounded over the fence at the road. I got to the fence where the knowledgeable girl was trying to explain that she knew who the ghost was. I was there in time to hear her youngest sister make her denial to her older sister's explanation that it was Elliott, she said, "Oh, I know it wasn't Elliott for his head was off and the blood was running all down in front". She had seen blood where there was none. I'll never know why they did not all attack me and mob me, which I deserved. My apologies meant little and my request that they forgive me had no response then or there. It was not so much a laughing matter, even to me then for I had hoped it would be only a momentary flare up, overlooked and excused by the planned explanation, but it worked out much worse and more serious than I could possibly

anticipate. However none died of a heart attack and time erased the offense of it. No grudges, hatred or malice came from it. Oh, the guilt and feigned innocence of boyhood. We all have to grow up.

The next story, more serious might be titled-

THE CRAZY MAN THAT MUMBLED

On a certain Saturday night while on my way home in 1908, after our home had burned and when my father and mother were living in the tenant house on his farm, I had closed the store around nine p.m. and was walking home 2 1/2 miles in the dim moonlight due to some cumulus cloudiness, I chanced to meet two brothers whom I knew well. We stopped in the road and they gave me the account in detail of a party they had just left at my uncle's home a quarter mile back. They named over most of the neighborhood young folks who had been present. I missed all these Saturday night parties because of my job at the store. I made my own parties.

Close to where we met was the corner of the fence where a cross land-line private road crossed the main road a few yards beyond, a tall elderly man lived. It had become common knowledge that he was losing his mind, and reports had circulated that he was thought to become dangerous to his family; having taken an axe into his house and kept it under his bed. He would walk alone on the road during the day and throw sticks at people passing, mumbling inarticulate words. He was in the habit of wearing a kind of overcoat or raincoat known then as a "McIntosh Coat". The bottom of it was below his knees and he was always seen summer and winter with the same old coat on, also a broad brimed hat.

When the brothers told me of two others of my acquaintences and that they had walked from the party with two sisters to accompany them home, "kinda' sparking", as we expressed it. These girls lived the opposite way from my uncle's home and from their own home. I said to these brothers, "Then they will soon come along here returning to their home", we will wait to see them and visit together. This decided, I asked if they were in shirts, no coat? (It was summer time.) They said, "yes, no coats", then I ask, is there any probability that either of them are carrying a gun but I was thinking all the time of a plan to scare them. I had missed the party and all the fun so now was my opportunity. I was also thinking of safety.

The night and the light were ideal, the location lending to thoughts of the crazy man was also ideal. So I soon had the whole plan concocted in my lone mind. Now for it's execution.

I said, "I have my coat on my arm with me and one of you is wearing a coat, my hat has a fairly broad brim, black like he always wears, give me your coat". He did and I buttoned the top button around my waist letting the tail and the sleeves flopping to below my knees, then put on my own coat.

In the dim moonlight I was a perfect imitation in outline of the crazy person, "Old Man Hyde".

Now the setting; I took a ten foot rail off the fence with me under a large "Black Jack" oak tree in the center of the lane to the left of the direction of their only approach. The main road they would be traveling was here, and for a quarter mile each way was itself a lane with a woven wire fence, on the bottom with two strands of barbed wire on the top, no side roads on this stretch of road. A deep sand bed for two hundred yards, and up a sharp rise to the front of my uncle's home. The opposite lane to one of the boy's home led along down hill to a running stream and was dark and thorny, all forest to his home. From the end of this deep sand bed toward the way from which they would be approaching had been washed clean of soil being down grade from the sand bed to where I would confront them and of a hard red clay, same as concrete. This was a fine race track for them to get off to a quick start if they turned back. The two brothers took their station in the left lane and beyond the great oak tree, (I had told them to lie down on the ground) whose hanging branches came down almost to the ground and formed a forboding dark and gloomy circle about forty feet in diameter. I took my stand under its protection and at the trunk of this tree, heavily covered with giant leaves, the largest of the oak family, making an impenatrable darkness especially at night. The ground under, as I supposed, was completely clear, no growth, nothing could grow under such a shade as it imposed.

Stooping low and dragging the rail till I reached the trunk then I reversed the direction of this half rotten rail so that when I should start out from under it I could drag it behind me, (the only way I could possibly take it out) when I should go to confront them in the road.

On their approach, first I heard their talking to one another, next I could hear their shoe heel clanking on this hard stretch of road nearest me. By these sounds only could I determine when to walk out from under this tree and confront them in the middle of the road. I had cautioned the brothers not to make any noise not even to speak to each other but to wait in complete silence, and leave all to me. This they were careful to do.

I meant only to confront and bluff them thinking they would be brave enough to confront me, being that there were two of them as buddies courting the two sisters and thought if they should turn on me I would make myself known to them and all together we would laugh it off for the joke it was intended to be, and we could visit awhile and then go on to our several homes, but these prospects didn't pan out as I hoped and expected. I thought also of the risk that they might become enraged at me and could team up on me and give me the mauling I knew I would deserve, but in this I felt safer for having these other fellows on hand to help out in any probable difficulty.

I didn't have more than a few minutes to wait, think and surmise just what might or could come of my plan, but I did consider their age, size and strength. One was a year older than I, the other a mature man, in his late twenties and the biggest joker and brag in the whole neighborhood. He loved a joke when it was on the other fellow. They could have strung me up by main force and hung me on one of those low hanging limbs of that Black Jack Oak. I ran out of thinking and planning time, my ears and my feet were all I had to guide me now, I was in complete darkness. I had to judge their distance, rate of advance and time mine to match, know when to get moving and leave the rest to careful on the spot decision.

When I judged the time right to move I took a few steps unable to see even the ground I was walking on. Surprisingly to myself I stumbled into some dead limbs full of dry leaves, somebody had cut off this tree to clear the road around it and had thrown them in a pile under it. The unintended noise I made stumbling over

them, being somewhat loud and unexpected in the silence of the night; caught their attention and they both stopped dead in their tracks, and waited giving me time to get out from under the branches. I came out stooping almost double and the accompanying noise made by the dragging of the rail and my action to then raise it up to full height, all the time mumbling some undistinguishable sounds, imitating the mumbling of the crazy man. They made no move but stood transfixed for a moment staring into the dimness of the night, they could only make out my faint outline. When I got all straightened up, rail and arms, the younger one of them made his decison then and there, wheeled on one heel as a pivot and broke into a dash of retreat. The other older bully and braver boy thought to stand his ground, but at the instance of his indecision, I swept the rail through the leaves of the limbs, the noise and the sight of the rail coming down helped him to decide instantly. He had lost a couple of seconds to the one already a few steps ahead. The rail decended and crashed to the ground at his heels, and broke into many pieces on the hard ground. It was all too real to speculate and there was no intent to investigate, nor was it a time for anything but to put distance behind them. Their heels pounded on the hard earth and their white shirts distinguishable, made a lessening picture like unto a train moving down the line. The head man was not to be overtaken and the rear man was not to be left in the lurch.

Now it was time for the three of us to vacate the area, fearing they might run only a short distance and return quickly to investigate, so I went around the trees in haste to where the brothers were lying on the ground in restrained laughter. I urged them not to make so much noise when shouts would not have been a check on the runners.

Anyway we kept away from the roads the two brothers went west and I took an opposite direction through the back woods and fields to reach home and go to bed.

The next day was Sunday and we had a singing by appointment farther on past our home at a neighbors home toward the Sepulga River. All the characters in the preceeding episode of the previous night were at the singing, also many from the Saturday night party. Up to this Sunday afternoon I had learned nothing of the outcome of the race, except that sitting on the front porch the two men who had not gone to their home came by on their way home that Sunday morning. I spoke to them and they to my sister and I as they passed where we sat on the front porch near the road, not more than twenty feet away. They passed quietly on and that afternoon I learned more of the results. The one nearest my age asked me to walk with him down the road at recess time after we had sung a spell, the sweet songs of Zion. I had a burning idea he wanted to question me as to my knowledge of what had happened the night before, and this was his purpose.

He began with a solemn plea thus; "Elliott, I want to tell you about what happened to my buddy and me last night". Then he told all to me what had happened on their way home from the party. He went over it all in detail, about the party, (I listened quietly and tried to show surprise), and their walking home with the two sisters, leaving them at their yard gate, returning past my uncle's place, by another home on the opposite side of the road and on to the lane where the big oak tree stood. About the first noise they heard, and that he had thought it was perhaps a cow under the tree getting up and walking over some brush. "We stopped", he said, watching for her to move out, but when we saw what it appeared to be, behold as we looked we visualized Old Mr. Hyde, and his crazy doings. Then when I saw the great beam rising from his up raised arms aloft in the air, I wheeled and fled for my life thinking every jump I might hear his

muzzle loader go off and I could almost feel the shot in my prospect. Distance was my immediate aim and I was putting it between us with all the speed I could muster. I could hear the foot beats of my buddy and had no thought to look back or wait for him. I felt the pursuing leaps could be the crazy man himself. My buddy almost overtook me in the deep sandbed and yelled "slow down." The steep rise in the road at Mr. Mancill's home, and the exhaustion of the quarter mile race also helped to slow us down, and we felt somewhat safe at this distance so we came to a stop together, out of breath, just had enough now to say a few words, the older man said to me, "You know buddy, this could be a prank played on us." I was just able to say between breaths, "If it was it sure has worked." The two of us had not until just then thought of going on back toward our homes but on consideration decided it would be too risky to try to pass him and his home, "we just won't do that." So then we decided it best to go back to the girl's home and ask to stay in their home for the remainder of the night, then go home in the daylight, Sunday morning. We walked on to their home and "hailed" at the gate; their father came out and asked what we wanted. We said we would like to stay over night, just put on the floor to sleep. Of course he took us in but we had to tell him why we were afraid to go home in the dark, that a "haint" was on the road.

Now, after telling me all this, there in the road during our singing recess, he asked me under pledge to tell him the truth. I did, and said now I know both sides, yours and mine. I told him fully my side of the prank, if it can be called a prank. He appeared happy to find out it was not the crazy man at all. He took it as a collossal joke and we laughed it off together. However, the other, the bully and a big joker himself when the joke was on someone else, did not accept it with any pleasure whatever. I humbly asked them both to forgive my doings and assured them that at the beginning I thought surely they will run only a short way, then return and investigate; and that I had gone home the back way. I had confessed my wrong to them, told them the truth and hoped they would not hold it as a grudge and offense against me. They promised not to, and were all through the years friendly as ever with me. One lived past 80 years of age and the other past 70. We all laughed over it together ever afterward. I have also repented of this along with many other sins, some worse, others not as bad, I am glad God tells us to repent but has not told us to forget - I am glad I could grow out of my evil ways and could mend my foolish life.

MY FIRST REGULAR JOB
1908 - 1909

I left the public school at age seventeen to work as store keeper at our second country store at Herbert. I kept the cash and purchase books, the credit accounts, did all the keeping of the stock, did the marking up of all the items, the selling and bagging and the wrapping of all articles. I was the clerk.

This store was owned by Mr. J. T. (Tom) Hudson. He was a farmer and a business man. He instructed and trained me strictly business like to keep the building cleaned, dusted and the floor and grounds swept and tidy, all the stock in order on the counters, on the shelves and in the showcases.

When I was careless, he cautioned me. He trusted me with all the money received and accounted for in a record kept of the daily sales not, of course, itemized. In fact, I had the whole duty and responsiblity of all the stock, the sales, receipts and payment of the bills. He reserved for himself only the buying, the deposit of the receipts in the bank and the signing of all checks in payment of all the merchandise bought.

I worked two complete years, 1908 and 1909. I began in January before I was eighteen, in September, and I resigned voluntarily at the end of December of 1909 after my nineteenth birthday in September of 1909.

For this work I received $20.00 a month and my board and room in Mr Hudson's home. This was seventy-seven cents a day. My week was from Monday 7 a.m. to 9 or 10 p.m. Saturday night. Then I walked three and one-half miles home to stay until Sunday afternoon.

I bought my own clothes, paid my own way, invariably spent almost all of my money. I only remember that I gave my father an amount I am ashamed to mention when his house burned to the ground on February 8, 1908, the second month after I started work.

I should have mentioned in the beginning that when Mr. Hudson offered me the job, a week before I accepted and started working for him, that I told him I would ask my father's permission before I could accept.

When I got home that afternoon from school of the day he offered me the job, I found my father at the rail fence on his farm with the mule to the wagon and a load of rails he had split. He was removing the bad rails and replacing them with new ones, working alone when he needed so much a son like me, age seventeen, to help him. He needed me not only to do this two man job of mending the fence, but he also needed me to do all the hoeing in his crops that year. But when I asked him, all he said was, "If you want to, you may." Not one word from him saying, "I need you at home to help me." If only he had spoken these words, I would have declined the job. He had expected I would be continuing in school, but I was finished in our grade school and would have had to go ten miles away to the nearest high school. He had planned ahead and had rented out some of his farm land and had constructed two tenant houses near his own and already had one renter living in one of the houses.

He realized he could not farm it all alone. He still had my younger and deaf brother, Gillis, at home each summer, but he was in the School for the Deaf at Talledega, Alabama, nine months each year. Then when our home burned in the same year of 1908, he had the other tenant, one bedroom house, vacant and finished. Gillis and I had put the shingles on the roof while we were out of school in the previous summer. This proved a fortunate situation for all of us in this emergency. Sister Essie was nineteen, still single and at home. I don't know how they managed with only one bedroom. Gillis, twelve, was home through the summer, and I was home every Saturday night; but where there is a will and necessity, ways are made, necessity being mother of invention. I learned this, too, later in my own family when I moved out of a seven room house into a two room house with a family of ten in 1930, when my home loan was foreclosed.

But my school days were not over. When I resigned my "store keeping" job, I had my mind made up to go back to school. This made it necessary to go away to school. Bro. George Clark had come to Herbert and had spoken at the school house. I heard him there in 1909. So he had sent me a catalogue of Highland Home College in Chrenshaw County, Alabama. My decision was to go there in January 1910. I was to be twenty-one in September of that year.

When I told Mr. Hudson of my intention to quit the job, he had favored a farm boy with, he was much down-hearted to let me go. But he knew me well enough by then that I was planning something better for myself and could raise no objection. If I had even thought to solicit assistance financially from him, I know he would have willingly given it to me, but I didn't even so much as think of it, not knowing what was ahead for me. I felt a measure of independence no doubt, because I had carelessly saved up $125.00.

MY FIRST ROMANCE
1909

Now I come to the first real romance with a teacher in the two teacher school, it was in the second year after I began work as clerk of the store for Mr. Hudson at Herbert, Alabama. I lived in his home and had the use of his fine gray horse and rubber tired top buggy.

Both the teachers boarded with my sister, Minnie Shaver who lived near and within sight of the store. The older teacher Miss Bessie Perdue had been my teacher next to my last year in school. The other, now her assistant, was Miss Mary Clyde Prince from Salem in Lee County Alabama. She was a graduate of Montevallo College for women, a couple years older than I and a fine good looking young woman. I made acquaintence soon and began visiting her in my sister's home on Friday and Sunday nights. She liked tennis, had a set and encouraged me to learn and play the game with her. We enjoyed each other's company, were interested in literature and engaged in discussing poetry of Longfellow's "Evangeline" and Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" and Shakespear. She made me a present of Shakespear's complete works in one padded back beautiful volume. It was educational to me to be with and talk with her. We came to like each other and this led to some romance. We not only enjoyed playing tennis a few times in the late afternoon when her day in school was done, but usually I was a regular caller on Friday night and Sunday night, the only nights she was free from her teaching job. I usually stayed only a couple hours. Occasionally, when we had an interesting discussion, as late as past eleven, I had to walk 2 1/2 miles home on Saturday nights and got back from home on Sunday afternoons in time to play tennis. Sometimes we got deep into Romeo and Juliet, but never got as far as, Venus and Adams one of Shakespear's poems. This last, I learned later was really too deep for us at our stage in romance, and inappropriate as well.

We made it no love affair. I remember that we never got on that mute subject. However, on one occasion I asked Mr. Hudson for the use of his fine dapple gray horse and rubber tired buggy, lap robe and all. This was to drive her to a party at the home of one of my cousins, Addie Mancill's home four miles on toward Evergreen, Alabama. This night was an unusually cold one and after a few hours in a warm house, we mounted the buggy and donned the plush lap robe for the ride back to Herbert. Among other items she spoke about the weather, how cold, and said, "My hands are freezing." I supposed she had no warm gloves and I had none to offer, so I made no response, offering no remedy for cold hands. Not long after she brought up the "cold hand" subject again and I was just a backward country boy with a dull mind, began to think on this instant that maybe I could help the situation, so

without saying a word, I reached over with my left hand under the lap robe and found one of hers cuddled in her lap, and knew no better than to grasp hers. Whereupon I learned I had made a breach of etiquette, no word from her either, she gently pulled her hand from mine and pushed mine away. No words were needed, action spoke the loudest and got the message over. I really meant no uncouth advance, but she must have thought so. Anyway this was my last approach with her, but not the last of our romance. This continued on as formerly and even beyond the expiration of her school term. By this time it had become more intense and might be termed fascination.

When the time came for her to leave, my loss of her companionship began to bear down on me, I decided to offer to take her to the railroad station and proposed to her to do just this. She consented and when the time came to go, I borrowed the horse and buggy again and showed up at my sisters, loaded her bags in the "back" of the buggy and off we went to Evergreen.

She had arranged with a college mate who lived at Evergreen to stop over night before leaving at 5:30 a.m. on 2 NOV, for Montgomery. I had friends in Evergreen also and I planned to spend that night with a boy friend, and told her I would be on hand in time next morning to take her to the station. I had put my horse up at the "Livery Stables." I appeared next morning, and drove over to "pick her up." On our way I told her I had decided to make the trip with her on the train as far as Montgomery. It was perfectly agreeable, you see we were both infatuated on this romance so soon to end.

I had told the Livery man to come to the station and take my horse back to the stables, a common practice. On arriving at the R.R. Station I "hitched" him with a "tie rope" to a tree that stood about thirty feet from the track and at the corner of the depot. I didn't even think that the horse might be frightened when the engine burst into sight from beyond the building, pumping great clouds of black smoke.

I calmed him down by holding to his bridle and speaking Woah! Woah! kindly and quieted him, but left him tied there. I'll never know why he did not break loose and run away with that buggy. But he didn't, I've thought many times this was the providence of God. This was his mercy to a stupid, overzealous, poor, country, christian, romantic youngster on this trip to Montgomery. I did not know then that the following April of 1910 I would return from Highland Home College to take a State Teacher's Examination in the Senate Chamber of the Alabama State Capitol Building.

It was indeed a new experience to me in more ways than one, arriving about nine or ten o'clock a.m. in the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Depot among the clanging of the bells, the meeting and passing of passenger trains, huffing and puffing. The hustle and bustle of passengers, going and coming, off and onto the long lines of coaches, sleepers, dinner, day coaches, luggage and express hand carts, iron wheels on pavement. Oh! such noise I had never known.

I was, I thought, a real helpful companion, to escort her into the waiting room, wait with her for her until she heard, "All aboard for points East on West Point of Georgia, for Tuskeege, Opalika, West Point, Atlanta." Then to escort her to her coach, see her safely on and seated, take her hand, tell her "goodbye" with a promise we would write each other regularly, then get off and watch in the window and wave her goodbye as the coaches were moving out, bound for, to me, the unknown lands to the East. This was indeed a farewell. We never saw each other again, but she got letters from Highland Home, Platsburg, Herbert, Enterprise and each place

where I taught school over the following four years. I returned to Evergreen on South bound No. Five that afternoon and drove home to my job that was to last from that day in May until the last day of December. My continued correspondence with Mary Clyde Prince was never mentioned to anyone during the next four years. It had to end the year I got married to another and without Mary Clyde ever knowing there was another girl in my life. I did not speak or write to her one thought or word of marriage, she perhaps was doing the same as I, with another man in her life. Suspence is one way to maintain interest.

I visited one of her brothers after the death of my wife, and from him learned she had married, was now a widow and lived in Atlanta. I inquired no farther. We, as so many others, had gone our separate ways.

MY TRIP TO COLLEGE
1909

Now, with the meager sum of $125.00 I had saved working at Mr. Hudson's store, I bought a trunk for my clothes, a new suit and some other clothes, packed it; and Papa took me and my trunk on the buggy to Evergreen for the trip by train to La Pine, Alabama, the railroad station two and one-half miles from Highland Home. There was not enough in farewells at home or from friends or relatives to leave any impression now on my memory. I had ridden on a train only twice before this trip, except for a trip with my mother when I was a child which I could only faintly remember, when she took Essie and me with her to visit her mother in Louisiana. I had made one trip to Mobile for my father to collect the $400.00 worth of pecans he had shipped to Warley Fruit and Produce Company and one trip to Montgomery in the year 1909 when I went there, that far, with a school teacher I had been courting, when she left to go to her home in Salem, Lee County, Alabama. But I will never tell all that happened on that trip, nothing cloudy, just stupidity of a country boy in Montgomery.

I had a few hours wait-over on this January 1910 trip to Highland Home; so I went to a photographer's shop there and had two poses in my new suit of clothes with "pen leg" trousers. I had a derby in my trunk but was wearing a felt hat with a wide brim.

I took the Atlantic Coast Line local late in the evening at a junction where there was not even a depot and detrained at La Pine at nightfall. I was met by someone at the station in a car, perhaps my first car ride, and driven to a boarding house on the border of the college campus, run by Bro. Paley Boyd. There I roomed and lived the five months of my college "career."

I paid my board, my tuition and incidentals. Room and board was $12.50 a month. Tuition for the five months in full at about $6.50 a month. I had to pay for my paper, stamps, and weekly laundry, a railroad trip to Montgomery for a state teachers examination in April. I also had to pay for my railroad fair back to Evergreen the last of May. All of this came out of my $125.00. I must have had some of it left because I paid my board and tuition to a two months' summer school in Evergreen at the Southwest Alabama College of Agriculture, not to study agriculture, but rather to brush up for another state teachers examination in July for a first grade certificate to teach in the public schools of Alabama. I had

passed in Montgomery in April and already had the certificate for second grade. I passed for first grade certificate. This was the highest except for life grade which I could and did take and pass after teaching five years with a first grade certificate. This certificate I still have, dated 1916, and received while teaching my first two months' school.

MY EVENTFUL FIVE MONTHS AT HIGHLAND HOME COLLEGE
1909

Something happened the first morning when I entered the study hall on the second floor of the college building that I didn't realize or know about for several months. I later learned that a certain young woman of sixteen summers sighted me among the three new men who were enrolled for January. She had singled me out and told her college mates to beware, "That one with the cap on is mine. All of you, hands off." I didn't even know about it, but my future choice for a wife had said this. As usual, by the grapevine you soon learn about most everyone in a small college. I heard rumors about a certain Miss Lee Wilson and met her two brothers, Jack and Dolan, who boarded at the Reynolds House.

Highland Home regulations about the ed's and co-ed's were really strict. There was to be no intermingling of the sexes, no talking together on the streets, in the study halls, in the class rooms and not even in church worship services. They each were to keep strictly with only their own.

It is almost impossible though to keep down communication altogether either by voice or pen; so there were notes passed by proxy and other breaking of rules by various means.

However, I was not there to be drawn away from my purpose - to apply myself strictly to my books - or to fall for a love affair. I did not let such trivial matters detract or hinder my purpose to obtain all I could to enlarge my knowledge and to enhance my education. I passed all my subjects in the final exams at the end of this term except for physics. This subject I had not thoroughly learned and had no desire to pass the examination. So I declined to take the exam, but, on returning home in June, I appointed myself as my own teacher. I assigned and recited to myself the whole text chapter by chapter and worked out all the problems and answered all the questions at the end of each chapter. I passed on physics at the state teachers examination in Evergreen that July, the following month. I also was my own teacher on the state book on "Theory and Practice of Teaching" required on first grade examination.

Upon the day of my examination, my old teacher of my childhood, George Harper, who was long time County Supt. of Education in our home county, Conecuh, offered me a rural school for a two month summer session for $40.00 per month. I accepted the offer and in July of 1910 my period of public school teaching began. So all my teaching from the first was under a State Teachers First Grade Certificate. My certificate came by mail during this first summer term. I will resume an account of my teaching experience, along with an account of our four years of courtship, with Cora Lee Wilson, which was mainly by weekly correspondence. I only made four or five trips to Mr. John Travis Wilson's home at Blackshear, Alabama, to visit with Lee and her parents and her eight brothers and six sisters. Her seventh sister was born in 1915 after our marriage on May 12, 1914.

She returned to Highland Home and continued in college three more years, the last two of which were spent at Freed-Hardiman Teachers' College and Training School in Henderson, Tennessee. My most to be regretted mistake of my life at that time was that I left off my college education and instead began teaching. The natural reason for this was that I had no visable means, as I saw it then, to pay my way in college and the apparent need to begin earning my own living. I reached age 21 in September of that year. I had taught my first two months before my birthday. We never know the future; it could have turned out for either better or worse, who knows. If I could have been in college with her all this four year interval, I might have gone into marriage prematurely and flunked my educational career. Instead, I maintained my own subsequent education by private study, by reading widely and by experience in the profession of teacher. By some, I was given the vain title "Professor Mancill", but this didn't fit; and it didn't raise my chin or turn into vanity. I was always, from the first, conscious of my limited knowledge and had to begin by teaching myself the phonics of the English alphabet, which none of my teachers had ever taught me, even the diacritical marks, punctuation or pronunciation; nor had I ever studied speech or enunciation.

However, I got a raise in salary and a school in Chrenshaw County at Old Providence School District near Petrey. My mailing address there was Rural Route from Patsburge down Luvern way. My salary was $75.00 a month for a seven months' term - fall of 1910 and winter of 1911. This was in the same county and not far distant from Highland Home, happily.

Going back in time now to our five months in the same school but not together. The rules purposed to keep us apart or to ourselves, our own sex, but this only promoted slipping around the corners and grapevine note writing daily.

We separately planned to make acquaintance, or, at least, to meet each other arranged by proxy. Her brothers, Jack and Dolan, became especially friendly to me and likewise I to them, purposely on my part.

Since both boys and girls were allowed on Saturdays to go to the local post office kept by the store keeper and post master, a brother Jones, but only in groups, never were we to be seen in public on the streets in pairs, girl and boy; but we could tag along, a group of boys behind a group of girls. There was an opportunity for a word loud enough to be heard; in fact, many words were exchanged from group to group and often between individual girl and boy, one to the other.

So on the first opportunity we had for us to see each other, we never missed this. On a certain Saturday morning, we crossed the street from the post office to see the sights of bales of cotton from the Harrod Cotton Gin, a bale lying flat on its side. I mounted it after handing Jack Wilson my Kodak, (I actually owned one and had it with me at college and on hand that Saturday morning). From a perch upon the new cotton bale, I extended my hand to a certain Miss Lee and hauled her up onto the cotton bale with me. Then her brother Jack snapped our first picture, a snap shot which I still have in my picture album. To be able, on the sly, to obtain a first picture of us together on our first adventure was indeed a triumphant accomplishment for each of us. But woe to us if any school official had seen us, but none were spectators. However, there were many spectators, but none were reporters; or we would both have been immediately on the next Monday morning summoned before the whole faculty body and been reprimanded or more probably expelled from college for such a breach of the disciplinary rules. There were

other snap shots later, also incidental meetings and constantly shy looks and visual attention between us. Daily notes were also passed around the corners when in the confusion of student body together going from class to class. These exchanges of glances and notes were never in study hall or class. Love can be recognized, known and seen often in action, but it can never be completely stiffled or obliterated; like murder, love wills out.

And thus does love ever come to the surface and find a way all on its own. I really tried not to detract her mind from her studies, this being an individual matter, and can never be controlled only by each individual. I surely controlled my own mind and gave no thought to it that detracted me from my school work. Only when study hours were over, did I ever give a minute of thought or time to writing notes to her; then they were only short and sweet.

At best, efforts to hinder and conceal our affections one for the other were hard. Finally, shortly before the close of the term, we became bold enough to sit together, that is, near by each other in the auditorium on an "open" entertainment night. Two other couples did the same. So this could not be overlooked by the faculty, so bold and public a breach of the rules of segregation of the sexes. We six by name received notices to appear before the faculty at a stated time. Jack Wilson and his girl friend Berdie Davis, one other couple whose names I would remember but do not at present recall, with Elliott Mancill and Lee Wilson got their summons to appear. Lee and I had a Bro. N. A. Jones, our language teacher, to promise to say a favorable word of leniency for us. But the president, Bro. Samuel Jordan, was staunchly for giving each of us forty demerits, the limit, which would expell all of us and send us racking home with a statement of cause to our parents. I was not twenty-one yet but, of course, did not wish to distress my parents with such a record as being expelled from college. So I asked for permission to speak in behalf for all six of us. I was humble and apologetic, stated we had no thought of willfully breaching the disciplinary rules of the college, but I related the practice permitted of the students spending the whole day together in the auditorium decorating the hall and stage with all the signs, flowers and greenery, often working in pairs and some pairs observed by everyone, sitting in the windows here or there together, with no thought that they were violating the rules. I closed by saying we all thought it could surely be no worse a breach of the rules to sit approximate each other in a gentlemenly and lady-like way in a public assembly, not in any measure misbehaving, but in a spirit of admiration and enjoyment of the program of music, songs and drama of both sexes on the stage together. This seemed to me a justifiable defense for our conduct, and I asked them to consider our case in this light. There was no rebutal to my first (I was really our defense lawyer) public address before an August assembly or court of judgement of our conduct; and, therefore, we pled innocent, at least in conscience. This statement turned the tide in our favor. I felt that I had made a noble defense, and the other five accused evidently thought the same way. But the trial was not over nor the judgement rendered.

Thereupon and with only one more member of the faculty to be heard from, Bro. Jordan addressed Bro. George S. Clark, our science and math professor, in these words, "Bro. Clark, you have been silent throughout the entire procedure. So we ask you, if you will, now express your thoughts on these cases."

Bro. Clark, without a show of any concern or even seriousness, (nothing ever moved him to any show of emotion), said dryly, "Bro. Jordan and fellow members of the faculty, I think we may as well perform the ceremony for each of these couples."

But Bro. Jordan was still adamant and concluded by suggesting that they give each of us twenty demerits and put us all on probation for the duration of the remaining days of the present term. To this all agree, including the six accused. So I reaped twenty demerits on my five months in Highland Home College, but I was happy not to have to go home in disgrace.

Indeed we heeded the warning of the probation, and there were no repeats of any bad conduct before the term expired. One incident to the contrary not withstanding unless, as I believe, the incident I now relate occurred before the one of the above trial, which of course was not found out. This incident relates to a visit to the local cemetery, which manifested not any interest in the dead, who had been buried there, but only the interest of the ones then living and present there, a group of girls from Bro. Jordan's boarding house and home for the girls only. They were allowed to visit the cemetery on Saturday or Sunday afternoons in a group of girls only, but a little bird broke the news of this visit to some of the boys from Boyds' and Reynolds' houses. Among the girls to be on this was a certain one, Miss Lee Wilson, and among the boys a certain young man, Elliott Mancill who now remembers none of the others, boys or girls, but only are these two still in my memory. Anyway it was a cherished memory of sitting on the lawn's green grass in a group and near to the one seated nearest to me, close enough to observe the pulsatings of this young lady's heart causing the rise and fall of the part of the breast exposed at the neck of her dress, if only a small but visable area, beating in unison and joy with my own heart beats. These were joyous and precious moments but only brief for none present could bear the risk of being thus together in a group. Nothing more than admiration and respect was manifested, no touch even of hand to hand, only an exchange of smiling glances and manifest happiness. Stolen sweets are ever the best.

However, when exams were over and a big dinner on an outdoor table in commemoration of what was known as "commencement"; and truly it was a commencement in which we then had the advantage, for we would be leaving for our homes the next day. Our probation was ended and school was "out", and now there was an element of freedom and many were the pairs now together here and there on the grounds and in and about the college building. All was over but the shouting. Now with this advantage we could linger in nearness and walk together in the evening shades and shadows in pairs with our girl to her boarding house at Bro. Jordan's home. He couldn't other but be happy with us and do nothing now to curb it. So we lingered on his wide veranda on the front lawn, around the beautiful rose and jasamines on his front lawn. When it appeared not be breaking up time on our own, he encouraged the cessation of all these joys together by coming out to the front steps and in solemn tones of apology, Bro. Jordan stated to all in a voice in silence in his usual kindly manner. These were his words as now I can remember, "Young gentlemen, I regret that I do not have accomodations for all of you in my home tonight. You are kindly requested to seek shelter else where." Needless to say, we did and with a kindly "thank you" and to everyone a "good night ladies", and we all sang together, "We hate to leave you now."

But Lee and I had tomorrow to think about. Oh, but I have overlooked one incident that I will relate out of place. This was after the dinner and in the early evening at the picnic dinner table on the ground and among the groves across the street from the college. Most everyone had left the area around the empty table. Only Lee and I lingered there. She sat on the edge of the table and I ventured too far with an anxious request and said to her, "Sweetheart, will you

kiss me?" On a second thought I would have been ashamed to make such an untimely request at this time in this situation. I got the reply and the rebuke I deserved, forthright and square. She said this to me, "No gentleman would ask a lady to kiss him." It was a stinging rebuke, and she was deeply hurt. It shamed me deservingly. I could make no reply, for I knew she had spoken the truth. She walked home alone from that table and to her room to cry alone, for she had deduced from this that my love was not the genuine love she had hoped it was. And I left in another direction to bear the shame I had brought upon myself. Never did I repeat this kind of request for the full four years of our courtship, nor until after our marriage in 1914. Nor did I kiss her at the close of the ceremony but waited until we were for the first time in our room together at the Gay Teague Hotel, on our honeymoon, in Montgomery and alone. I sat in a chair while she went to the sink in the corner of the room and took up, as I felt, too much time getting the white carnations arranged in a vase. After this when she turned her back away and faced me, then our look broke its bounds and a recognition of our union and oneness had a real beginning.

Then was the real beginning of a long and eventful life of unrestrained companionship that lasted for fifty-seven years, each filled with both happiness and sorrows. Sickness and health and poverty and plenty. The beauty of its every year was that we had a truly Christian home fully devoted as my name, Devocious, suggested each to the other. Soon our home life and family grew and as Longfellow wrote in Evangeline, "We filled our home with love and the faces of happy children."

NOW THE TRIP HOME ON THE TRAIN
1909

Mr. Wilson had come up on the train to accompany his two sons and two daughters from college, Jack, Dolan, Lee and Minnie. He didn't know till then that his sixteen year old girl would have a young man sweetheart to sit with all the way home from La Pine through Montgomery and as far as Evergreen on Louisville and Nashville number one fast passenger train where I left her to continue on to Baldwin County. I had time that day to apologize for my fool hardiness and to assure her I would never repeat the blunder and respect her for what she really was, a lady indeed in every respect. Afterward she put aside my every advancement to hold her hand or to touch her at all. She had truly put me in my place.

When I got home, I composed her my first letter and a romantic poem about our ride home that day. This silly poem has rightly been lost, and I can't recall even a line of it; but romance had taken hold with us both.

At home I set me up a table for study and hung a netting over it to keep out the house flies (we had no screens). I bought a copy of the state text on first principles of physics, Gages. I had walked out on the examination and flunked this subject, but now I became my teacher, mastered it in two weeks; then took a summer course at Evergreen and began my profession as teacher in the public schools of Alabama.

I am not sure, but it is highly probable, I made a first trip to her home at Blackshear in Baldwin County when my summer school was out and before going back to Chrenshaw County to teach under Bro. Sharp as my county school superintendent

that fall and winter. We began a correspondence, a letter each way most every week to last for four years. My purpose was to become fully acquainted with Mr. Wilson and all his family and his relatives. I was fortunate in making a good impression on her mother, father and those I met there in the community and in the little family congregation of the Church of Christ. This was all a pleasant experience to me.

And, too, one other bit of knowledge I gained at Highland Home there the previous spring. At the congregation there I was selected a few times to lead singing at the church service, and on one occasion to serve as an usher at the communion service. I had been a Christian from age thirteen; now I was a young man of twenty summers. On this particular occasion, I was usher on the ladies side (the ladies occupied one side, wives and all), the husbands and all males on the other side. I had met and liked Lee so now I had a chance to observe that she too was a Christian and a member of the Lord's church. I remember noticing only one person that took the communion that day. Not that all others did not, for I am sure the members all took it as was customary, but this one registered in my memory when I should have and did also remember, then, the death of Christ, but this one young sixteen year old girl that day became alive in my heart because I learned then for sure she was a Christian. This knowledge settled in my mind then and there her eligibility of becoming my wife, and soon thereafter I asked her on one occasion if she had ever thought what it would mean to be a preacher's wife. She must have indicated in some degree it would be an honor. We mentioned this no more in word or letter for four years. Time proves all things. My thought then was that I just might preach some.

When I got back to my school after the Christmas holidays and a visit of several days in Mr. Wilson's home, I was a sick man. It had been bad cold weather, and I had stayed in the parlor for hours on end, hour after hour, by a warm fire in the fireplace. Her younger brothers had "toted" in firewood and stacked it high, not only in the parlor but in my private bedroom. There were ten rooms in their dwelling counting the parlor, kitchen and dining room. Somehow I developed a "cold", and by the end of the week the condition grew worse. Then it fell to Jack's lot to drive me to the railway station at Atmore, twenty miles away where I was to meet number six about five o'clock the next morning. We were to leave about 10:00 p.m. that Friday night of December 1910. The buggy trip was made in freezing weather and arrived about 3:00 a.m. the last day of December. We drove to the hotel, put the horse up in a livery stable and got the proprietor of Atmore Hotel up at the early cold morning to build us a fire. He did grumble, and rightly so, but we paid him the price of a room with a fireplace and insisted we get a fire. We warmed up and did go to bed but need not have for that one hour before the train was due from Mobile to Montgomery. He decided to go with me that far, as he could return on the next south bound train and return home the next night. I got to my boarding place sick, but, when Monday came and my school was to open, I went on in rain and sleet and ice. I had only a make shift overcoat and a parasol. I did keep dry but not warm. At the school house with a board floor with open cracks between each board, I found no wood in the house, ice over all the woodpile outside and axe frozen in the ice. I had to use the axe, chop wood, carry it in and build a fire in a little heater. Only a few pupils came, but I kept school all day, hovering around the little heater, keeping that thin overcoat on; but, of course, was cold and shivering all the day. Then I walked two miles back to my boarding home. I don't need to say I went to bed that night and a hard chill seized me,

fever ensued and a doctor was summoned. His diagnosis was pneumonia. I was seriously ill, possibly near death for seven days. Every one of my forty school children except one girl, Sue Holiday, came to visit me. Two of my young men, brothers Fletcher and Dave Spurlock (I conducted Dave's funeral here in Mobile), were my night attendants and alternated to remain with me at night and nurse and give medication. I will remember them and be grateful for their service in helping to pull me through this crisis in my life. Both Spurlock's and most all my pupils in that school have already preceeded me. But Dave's son George Spurlock is now my dear friend and fellow Christian here in Mobile, and his son has preached at Pleasant Valley where I attend worship regularly.

My pen sweetheart learned somehow that I was sick, and she sent me by mail a box of violet blossoms and narcissus to cheer me. She was back in college at Highland Home that January 1911.

I lost a month from my time of contract and made up the time, added at the end. When my school was out and I left for home, I had planned a stop over at Highland Home to their "commencement" in May or June. I had not let Lee know this. I got there as a surprise to everyone, and would you think it? All the boys told me she had another sweetheart. I did not intrude between them, but made a date with Verna Jones for commencement night and sat through the program with her in the auditorium. Lee's new sweetheart, McCain from McKenzie, Alabama, was evident and someone pointed him out to me. He had given her a ring and a wide "gold" bracelet. He was drinking and was intoxicated that night, and Lee was blank; but she was to be reasoned with.

On the Sunday following the worship service, she got permission from Sister Jordan to accompany one of Sister Boyd's lady friends to her home, my old boarding place. I don't remember this girl's name. Lee arranged with Sister Boyd for a room to invite me to see her that afternoon.

I was fair with her in this meeting and told her that if she liked the other young man enough to want to continue sweetheart with him that I would agree to give up my claims. She was ready and had planned to "make up" with me. So we made pledges together to continue our courtship together. This ended his competition against me. She gave him back his ring and gaudy bracelet. I gave her nothing material except maybe a box of chocolates and my pledge not to forsake her. This was not an engagement but only a continuation of close friendship. I told her and encouraged her to go on to college and hoped she would and graduate, something her father was able to do. So next year 1911 - 1912 at the fall term she, Minnie, Jack and Dolan changed to Freed-Hardeman College and attended two years. When the fall of 1913 came, she was tired of school and wanted to stay home and did. The others went back to Henderson. When I made the fourth visit to their home the holidays of 1913, I still had not proposed marriage to her. I was in my second year of teaching in Coffee County near Enterprise, Alabama, and had a salary of $100.00 a month.

She had reached age twenty and was a mature woman. She was the oldest of the girls in her family, only one brother Dolan was older, and none of them had married. She was ready mentally and physically and, I must say spiritually, to make the break in their family circle. She did not tell me this; I was reading between the lines.

So it happened during one of our sessions in the parlor in their home on this last visit. She, on the initiative, had a question I had to answer one way or another. She said to me, "I desire to know why you continue coming to visit in our home?" Of course, we had told one another when we were together and also in our

letters to each other that we loved one another. Many times we had repeated to one another, "I love you." But now I could see she wanted to know how much longer I expected her to wait and be content. So I said that if you have your mind made up and want to get married, we will make our engagement now and you can set the date. I said the date must be after my present school term closes, which will be in May of 1914. I told her what day of the month; then she said, "Will the fourteenth be acceptable." I agreed, but we did not seal it with a kiss. I had long since learned my lesson; so I only renewed my sincere vow of love, also she to me. Back home I mailed her a plain engagement ring.

But this was not all; I told her then that I had no home, no house of my own, that I was from a poor family and had only my meager salary; and that she was leaving a far better home than I could ever promise her. But these circumstances were set aside as of no consequence. We together realized that love will find a way.

When I got back to Coffee County, I had a future date to look forward to. I counted down the days I would eat a cold lunch at a school house and spend lonely nights alone. The days dragged by so very, very slowly. I told no one until I got back home after my school closed. Then I told my father what he no doubt had long expected that "we will be married the fourteenth of this month."

In the meantime, I had gone to a tailor shop in Enterprise and ordered two suits and selected the goods, one black worsted, the other a gray. When I took these two new suits to my boarding place, I put them in my trunk, but I have a notion Mr. and Mrs. Harrel had suspicions "something was up."

I dated one fine quiet girl older than her two sisters who were in my school. She may have got rumors I had two new tailored suits, but I gave out no hints. One of my assistant teachers, Miss Bertha Collins, was also to get married that spring, but it was well known in the community who her fiance was, a Mr. Paschal. Still I was silent. I kept this all in my heart as sacredly as Mary the mother of Jesus kept her secrets in her own bosom.

Marriage, and that to a Christian woman, was sacred to me; and I had long since determined that it would be a one time experience and be enduring and constant as were the seasons of the year and as day and night. God has blessed me for this to be all my hope and prayer.

1910 TO 1917

MY TEACHING BETWEEN JULY 1910 AND MAY 1914
THE INTERVAL BETWEEN COLLEGE AND DATE OF OUR MARRIAGE
SCHOOL NUMBER ONE

Upon completing my State Teachers Examination for First Grade State Teacher's certificate I signed my first contract for a school for two months of the summer of 1910.

The Subjects on this examination were:

1. First Year Algebra through Quadratic Equasions
2. Plane Geometry, First Year

3. Introduction to Physics
4. Composition and Rhetoric including Literature
5. Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching

I took this examination in July, my school began the same month the following week. My first grade certificate was mailed to me from Montogomery and signed by Supt. of Education Abrecombie. So my teaching began under a first grade certificate. After teaching for five years I would be eligible for the examination for Life Grade Certificate. These first four years were prior to my marriage. I would be twenty years old in September after my first two months of teaching. My salary for this school was $40.00 a month, twice what I earned the two years in the store as clerk and book keeper. This was at the Garvin school district in my home county, called "The Garvin School House." Otherwise known, because it was back woods, in a forest of virgin long leaf pines. Known as Lizard Lope when it was used for Hoe Down's, Parties and Picnics. There was not a residence within sight of the building. For water there was a dug well about fifty yards from the building and an Out House only for the girls. The boys could hide behind the pine by walking a hundred yards or so. The trees were so large and stood close together that there was little visibility that far away.

The building was of rough wide pine boards upright and a narrow "batten" nailed over the crack-joints between them. The roof was of hand split pine boards, lapped end over end, in rows, every board was placed over the crack between the boards in the row below. These roofs effectively kept the water running to the eaves.

Inside, the floors were of the same as those on the walls, the cracks in the floor were not covered so provided for ventilation, good in summer but bad in winter. It was thus fortunate to have school in the summer, but for the gnats and houseflies, for there were no screens and no windows. The walls and the attic were un-ceiled. The benches too were of wide flat boards but fortunately too, these were planed, smooth for comfort but not for ease. There was only one board for the back support about eighteen inches above the seat. This type and pattern was common in the rural churches and school buildings. While on the subject of benches, or "seats" it will be timely to tell of the habits of one of my pupils, Grady Garvin. His father was one of the trustees and this ten year old son was about to develop "hunch back" because he was in the habit of trying to sit on his back. The space between the seat and the back was what I would say "wide open." His back in a wide curve went out into this open space and I had to constantly remind him to sit up straight else you will develop "hunch back-curvature of the spine." This opened the road for me to do some teaching. I began to inform him that he had a long bone extending from his neck to his hips made up of short joints so it will bend and this set of short joints is called the "spine."

I was teaching physiology to him but he didn't know this. I told him if he curved his back through this open space between the seat, he would soon have a crooked back like a fish hook, which meant "curvature" of the spine. And for seat you have one to sit on also a seat to put it on. Surely you must know your back was not made to sit on, but you have a seat to sit on, my teaching finally got through to him. He said Oh! a seat to sit on, now I know what you mean by seat, that's my butt. I said "Right, OK, use the seat then to put your butt on and quit trying to put your back where your butt ought to be. I had a whole school learning and they "just laughed and laughed." All seemed to enjoy the lesson on physiology.

I boarded at Mr. Coy Miller's two miles from the school house and his one son

and two daughters walked with me daily to school and back. It was good to have them for company all the other pupils went in other directions and I would have had a lonely road to travel. I always knew what I would have for supper each evening. They had mostly okra in their garden and it bore all summer and had to be picked and eaten every day. I liked it fried very well but never boilded in the slimy stage. I was careful to tell them, "Fry it."

I had a room to myself but there was no bathroom anywhere in the rural districts, fortunately there was a pretty free flowing but small "branch" near. I was country bred myself and said "stream" when we meant branch. My sisters washed clothes at a branch not far from our home. When I reached home in the heat of afternoon I truly enjoyed taking my soap, cloth, and towel and make a hasty trip through the woods to this clear cool branch and with only the birds for spectators and the trees for cover lavish in this luxury and silence. Then return refreshed from my day in a hot school room and a good country supper, peas, cornbread, ham and okra, fresh milk and butter. I needed the okra for iron to be equal to eight hours and eight grades - beginners through the seventh grade - forty in all.

In the school we had a new arrangement, (new to me, not to them), for their writing lesson. One period for all the school that were old enough to use pen and ink and a "copy book." This was a wide board attached to the walls, one on each side of the room. It was high enough so they could stand at it, one low for the younger the other higher for the taller. Every pupil had a writing period all at the same time. I could pass from one to the next all around the room to inspect, instruct and correct errors and give them grades. We did have blackboards and I had the beginners and first grades learning to use crayon's, chalk, white writing sticks - pencil like, that came 100 in a wooden dove tailed box with a sliding lid. I had to put letters on the board and have them copy - imitate the shapes on a line below.

It is quite an achievement for a teacher to arrange a daily schedule for seven (or sometimes I had eight grades) so that time can be parcelled out to have a period for every subject in every grade. EVERYDAY. I made it my business to meet this challenge, varying only in a few subjects by having one or two subjects on alternate days.

Fortunately for me this school was only eight miles from our home and my father would take me there with his horse and buggy on Sunday evenings and send for me on Friday evenings. My parents were always kind and helpful to me. They had no praise to offer, no criticism to make but their actions and attitude spoke louder than words. I always was happy when my schools closed and I could return to Home Sweet Home, be it ever so humble, there's no place like it. Then I always felt so blue in the fall of the year when I had to go away from home and the joys, comforts, and the satisfaction of home; to go to a strange community to new people, wondering how I would cope with my responsibilities as a teacher. It was truly a trying challenge. At this first school I had no problems of discipline as I did often in subsequent ones.

SCHOOL NUMBER TWO
FALL OF 1910

Brother George S. Clark at Highland Home, without request from me, recommended me to Brother Sharp of Luvern for a one teacher, one room school in Crenshaw county of which he was superintendent of Education. This school was in "Old Providence" District, 6 miles from Peatry the nearest railway station. Bro. Sharp sent me a contract to sign for a five month term at $75.00 per month, I accepted.

Mr. Sam Spradley met me about 6 p.m. on Saturday before the school was to begin on Monday. He was driving a pair of mules hitched to a two seated surry (double seated buggy). I was to board in his home, 1 1/2 miles from the school building. In due time we drove up to his home in the dark, his wife had supper waiting for us.

The school house was typical in construction, very similar to one I had in my home county, located on a knowl of ground covered with iron pebbles the size of peas and the soil washed off. This was the play ground. There was a church and cemetery adjacent. For heating there was an open fire place and chimney at the end opposite the teacher's rostrum. Only the rostrum floor was of tongue and groved lumber, all the main floor of boards with open cracks between. I did raise enough money before real cold weather to buy a small horizontal heater and have a flue built, located about center of the room. In January I had pneumonia.

I had forty pupils here and eight grades. My first problem and a major one was to allocate the time for classes and grades, ten minutes the shortest period and twenty minutes the longest for recitations. We called it "hearing lesson."

The first impression I made on the trustees, about which I was told at the close of the term, was that they thought I was too young and they were skeptical, thinking they had made a mistake in hiring me.

I had a case in discipline here, two boys in their early teens had a fight. One hit the other over the head with a dinner pail, the kind in common use was round, made of tin with a bail to carry it. The blow with the bottom edge of this pail cut the scalp and got blood. The father of one boy sent me word next day that if I punished his boy, he would meet me the next morning at the crossroads and beat me up; even sent his wife to my boarding place to tell me this. She told me he was really mad. I think there had been grudges between these families. Nevertheless I punished them both and equally and before the school closed this father apologized to me concerning the threat.

Altogether I conducted a successful school and Bro. Sharp gave me a good recommendation, saying I had taught the best school of any in his county.

This school in the fall of 1910 and spring of 1911.

MY SCHOOL NUMBER THREE
1911 AND 1912

The next year I was hired again in my home county and taught that term in the same district, the same location where I had been a pupil all through my rural

school days, at Herbert, Conecuh Co. Here I had a better building, a two story structure, and two school rooms, and an assistant teacher, Miss Vela Lott one of my former school mates. This was my first with an assistant and a division of the grades. We had nine grades, she the 1st through the 5th, and I the 6th through the 9th. Here I was successful and satisfactory; but not without a problem in discipline. Again two boys had a fight and I punished them and here too the father of one threatened my life; but I avoided any serious consequences.

There might have been serious trouble here but I feel that providence was the reason for averting it. A storm came in the spring before time for school to close and damaged the building. Our school was closed for repair work.

And too, the interval gave me opportunity to attend summer quarter at the University of Alabama, June through August of 1912.

While at the University I had contact with Bro. N.A. Jones, a former teacher at Highland Home and he recommended a school to me in Coffee county for the school year 1912 and 1913'. Also the school year 1913 and 1914. I was paid $100.00 per month here.

THIS WAS MY 4TH SCHOOL
1912 AND 1913'

Located at Batten's Cross Roads, six miles south of Enterprise toward Coffee Springs. I was not informed of the trouble the teacher had there the previous year. A fight between the principal and one of his pupils, in which the whole school was disrupted, all the children in fear had deserted and left the school ground. In their fight they had broken out the glass panel of the front door. I was told about this situation upon my arrival there two weeks before school opening date. My early arrival gave me opportunity to visit the families and get acquainted, and for them to appraise me. I was older then and more experienced. Here I had two assistants.

In all here, we had 90 pupils and nine grades. Superintendent of Coffee County then was C.H. Byrd, Enterprise. He was also an Insurance Agent and I had him write me a 20 year endowment policy.

I did some of my best school work here and stayed for a second year. All the time I taught school I began each day by reading a chapter, singing a song, and praying for God to guide me "This Day."

I had frequent public programs - Songs, readings, recitations, drama entertainment, Temperance programs, etc. I took an active part in community endeavors - made friends with all I met and knew.

Here at Battens Cross Roads I had some trouble with a younger brother of the young man who had the fight with the teacher the previous year. I was careful to avoid friction. I asked submission to punishment before executing it.

In this case, anticipating trouble and in submission, I dismissed all the school temporarily outside only keeping the offender and two only of my non-involved pupils for witnesses. When the room was cleared, I asked him if he was willing to submit to punishment? He replied, "I will not." I said to him, then, "you are hereby expelled from school." He had not expected this and was

reluctant to leave, so I said, "I have my school work to do so," pointing I said, "there is the door, leave immediately." He was still reluctant and hesitant. Then I said, "if you won't leave now, and voluntarily I will have an officer called from town and have him take you home or arrest you for disturbing the peace of my school." He saw that I was determined and meant to do as I said, so he unwillingly walked slowly out, thinking maybe I might offer force to evict him. But I knew better than to attempt this. This is what he thought I would do, he left the house and the grounds, then I rang the bell and had my pupils to return and they did. I proceeded as if nothing had happened, said nothing to them about the affair.

The same day while eating my cold lunch, he had returned and sent a messenger in to tell me he was returning and wanted to come in and take his punishment. I sent him word back, that "As soon as I have finished my lunch, I will call for you."

He came in, and I commended him for a right decision and promised that if he would conduct himself properly, I would now punish him and allow him to remain in school for the remainder of the school term.

This all happened during my second school year at Battens Cross Roads. A few months later I was on my way home and on to Blackshear to be married on the 12th of May 1914.

All my subsequent teaching was to be done after we were married.

My school for the term, 1914 - 1915 was at McKenzie, in Butler county. My brother, Ernest, was L & N Station Agent at McKenzie and I do not know, but probably recommended me to the school trustees there.

However during the summer of 1914 after our marriage and our Honeymoon to Mammoth Cave Kentucky, I had a two month's summer term offered me back in my home county, Conecuh. The school was called the Langham school, of which a Mr. Langham was a trustee. Supt. of Education R.E.L. Key offered me this school and I accepted it at $40.00 per month. I also had one assistant at this school, one of Mr. Langham's sons. We had but one room but we divided it, and we both taught in the same room. Not so satisfactory nor at all to be desired, but in that period it was "make do" with what was available. One thing that this provided was that the principal could easily observe the proceedings of his assistant. This is the reason I learned how that on one occasion I observed him to be "fast" asleep while his reading class was reciting. I felt it my duty to "wake him up." So I walked back, shook him by the arm and said, this is poor teaching procedure. At least you must stay awake to teach. This was perhaps his first and last "nap" on his job.

Here my wife and I boarded with Mr. & Mrs. Edgar McInnis. Our board was $10.00 per month each, one half of my salary. My father had suggested that I leave my wife in his home while I was teaching for this short term and cut in salary. I replied that I had married her to live with her and although I can see the economy of accepting your fine and much appreciated offer I must decline and keep her with me. There was a reason, we had many pleasant hours, evenings after my return from school we took walks together in the enjoyment of talking together, fulfilling our dreams of happiness together. Mrs. McInnis was a pleasant companion for her during the daytime, and they had hours to talk together and she was getting first hand lessons in cooking and housekeeping. She had a yard full of flowers, a garden, also a flock of chickens and friars she raised, so we lived and fared fine on friars and fancy vegetable dishes, cornbread, biscuits, butter and milk country style. We really were projecting our honeymoon, and I felt better to be paying our

way, walking two miles to school and to home. This was the best two months of my life. Now I had a real purpose and desire to walk home for, so unlike all the years I walked home evenings to loneliness.

MY 5TH YEAR TEACHING
AT MCKENZIE IN BUTLER COUNTY
FALL - WINTER - SPRING 1914-1915

This is a small town on The A & F Railroad. We were fortunate here to board with my brother Ernest near the school house and to go for a warm lunch each noon. He was Station Agent there and owned a nice home. His fater-in-law, Mr. Hill lived with him. Mr. Hill was a veteran of the civil war. He related to me several accounts of his experiences that were very interesting.

Here we had two buildings, three teachers, nine grades. My salary was never more than $100.00 per month. Now I had to pay board for two. For the first time, I had no problems of discipline. This was my most pleasant year of teaching. Wife and I were so happy together in this our first year of marriage. There was another first, the first boarding place to have a piano. Both our wives played, and we all sang together frequently. This too, was a pleasant experience.

School work was routine, and the days passed uneventfully.

Mr. Hill owned a house that he kept for rent. It became vacant so I rented it and here began another first. We set up housekeeping, a new experience. It was unfurnished. I bought a four cap cast iron cook stove with an oven, and Lee began her first year learning to cook. I bought a fat pig, killed and dressed it, my first butchering. Her brother Jack visited us and he and I went to a Turkey Shooting match. My brother loaned us his Winchester pump action twelve guage shotgun and Jack instructed me how to get more shot in the target by aiming below the target (a piece of white paper with a cross in pencil placed on the ground). We walked off with a turkey each. Then my next first was to dress a turkey. All this was school first hand to Mr. and Mrs.

Her father surprised us with a shipment of household furniture from L. Hamels in Mobile and sent Jack to be with us and help us set up housekeeping. Without my knowledge Lee had written home that we were moving into a vacant house. This information started the ball rolling. Grocery buying was the next "first." "Experience keeps a dear school" and there is none better. Note my change of this last clause. The original was, "but fools will learn at no other." At least it is educational.

So this section tells more about our learning than about my school teaching at McKenzie Alabama. We graduated many years hence, fifty-seven wonderful years later. The most solemn lesson of life is to learn that every union ends in separation, ("Till Death do us part"). Begins in happiness, ends in sorrow, but not really in the sorrow that has no hope. "But I would not have you ignorant....concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope." "....For....them that sleep (die) in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess 4:13,14) "That they may rest from their (fifty-seven years) of labor and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

Of these old and new schools at McKenzie; the new private lasted fifty-seven

years, the old public ended the next May at the end of our first happy year of marriage, a most successful year in both experiences.

From McKenzie we moved our new furniture into a tenant house on my father's farm to live there only through that summer and then to move again to Belleville, Alabama, in my home county for my 6th & 7th years of teaching.

MY SIXTH AND SEVENTH YEARS OF TEACHING
FALL 1914-WINTER 1917

Here I taught two full years and through December 1917. I helped my father some on his farm that summer, living free of rent in his tinned roofed tenant house, no ceiling on the overhead, or covering for the walls, no screens, we used mosquito nets over our bed but had to keep our food in a "safe" from the house flies. I planted and "worked" a very fine vegetable garden.

There we had a nightly intruder, a very close, too close, neighbor house tom cat, a real knowledgeable adult cat. We went to bed nights to be awakened by him in our kitchen on our dining table. I broke his visits with a shotgun.

I broke something else there too. I did not know at first that there were other occupants on the premises. This I learned one morning early, about sunrise. Not having any "splinters" (fat pine for kindling) in the cook stove to prepare our breakfast, I went outside and I found my axe and a pine stump in our front yard. There was a root exposed above ground and suitable to be used to "start" the fire. The first blow of the axe disturbed those other occupants living on our premises. In seconds even moments, a buzzing in the air about my head was very informative who my attackers were. I had unwittingly disturbed a nest of yellow jackets. I don't need to tell, but I got on the move. But for it being so early, just at day break, I would have been stung very seriously. It was bad enough. My axe was discarded, I needed my hands to "knock, knock, knock, and my feet to go, go, go. In short I made a quick getaway, instead of having "seven years of bad luck for killing the cat, I cut it down immediately to seven seconds of getting away from bad luck." The luck was gone and me with it. Quite educational. I don't even now remember any more about "splinters and breakfast." These important daily affairs faded in the remembrance of more pressing duties. But the insects or I, one or the other had to vacate, I stayed. The following darkness of night found me warrily kindlening a fire over their home. All this was some more schooling, before moving to Belleville before my contract there was to begin that September. There was more to moving than I then knew.

I made a trip to Belleville 23 miles away, during August to find a house to move into. What I found, from one of the school trustees was a house on a thirty acre farm for sale. He, Mr. Clarence Hines, the trustee, owned it. He showed it to me and I made a deal with him to buy it for $1200.00 that I didn't have. He agreed to take $500.00 down and a mortgage for the balance. Lee and I made a trip to her home in Baldwin County, and I requested a loan from her father for the $500.00. He agreed and took me with him to Mobile, 28 miles to Bay Minette (he owned a Cadillac), but then a person could only go by railway from Bay Minette to Mobile. In Mobile we walked into Peoples Bank of Mobile (now defunct), went to a

window, and asked for a loan. The loan was secured by only a promissory note, due in one year. I signed the note, Mr. Wilson endorsed it and they put the money in my hand. This too was a lesson for me in business. His writing ability was limited to the writing of his name, and this his wife had taught him to do after they were married. A year latter I paid this note after his death in May 1916. He died at age 50 leaving his wife with a family of twelve and herself. Only my wife, and his oldest daughter were married at his death. The winter before his death he had bid on a lease of a large body of virgin pine timber south of McKenzie in Butler County. His bid for only the turpentine lease was $100,000.00. He lost the bid to River Falls Lumber Company whose bid was $105,000.00. In a business way his loss of the bid, I consider, was the providence of God. For he died and his heirs would have been left with the business and in all probability have had a failure and bankruptcy. As it turned out he left them in good financial circumstances.

I now faced a difficult situation before moving to Belleville in the fall of 1915 to begin my school work. The house I bought had a renter living in it, and my problem was to get him to move out so I could move in before beginning the school term. He had rented, only the house, not the land. I had only ten days before my school was to begin. I pled with him but to no avail. I could have evicted him legally but felt this to be unfair to him. He was stubborn. He had a problem also, having a corn crop of some ten acres some distance away and for this, I offered to pay him his price if he would vacate. He accepted, moved out and we moved in.

There was one week left for me to gather this corn three and a half miles away. I immediately began, walking to this job, jerking, not pulling the ears, piling them in "wind" not "wind" rows. I finished late the second day, was tired and stopped by Mr. Ward's to engage a team and wagon to haul the corn the following day.

He was feeding his mules, and knowing I was tired, with this distance to walk, suggested I ride one of the mules home then back in the morning. He bridled and saddled one, before this mule had finished eating his corn. This mule was also engaged in the corn business.

I mounted and had to persuade this mule to leave the home premises and his partially eaten supper. Mules, being half-ass "know their Masters crib." (Isa. 1:3) and this one knew he had not left his "Stall" nor his trough "clean" (Prov. 14:4). I could not blame him for being reluctant to leave nor did he know I was taking more ears along for him than he had on his head. Communication between himself and me was a bit difficult.

About a mile from the feed box something unusual was, in the providence of God, about to happen. I failed to fathom the depths of this mule's mind or of an o'possom's cunning. In the dimness of the failing twilight another little 'possom emerged from the thicket, to cross ahead of my mule to the thicket on the other side. A thought popped into my mind, how amusing to my wife would it be for me coming in after night holding a 'possom by its tail. In a flash I made a rash decision, to dismount and grab the little fellow before he could get across. It didn't work out that way, he got to the bushes before I and, providentially for him, there was a hollow log handy. He must have known the log was there but only God and the 'possom knew.

In disappointment I looked around and what met my gaze was the tail end of my mount with his head pointed at his masters crib. I had failed to remember my proverbs in time. He struck a trot and then I knew he could out run me, so I stood aghast.

What a "fix" to be in and me a school teacher and the principal of a three teacher school in a district of strangers. I made up my mind then and there for this tale not to "get out" like I had got off. I was "got off" with indeed and in fact.

I rationalized quickly and reviewed my lesson standing there alone in the road. Basic fact number one, the mule is lost, only to me, he "knows his master's crib;" number two, Mr. Ward will find him the next morning cropping grass if he can find any grass; number three, Mr. Ward will wonder what happened to Mancill, the new school principal; number four, the mule can't tell the 'possom tale nor will I tell it, not even to my wife, from whom I should keep no secrets. But the mule and I have kept it to this day, April Fool month 1976. At this writing the tale can't damage my reputation as a school teacher nor can it damage the mule or the 'possum and, a sobering thought, I need to make a confession of my mental weakness, now while I can. I don't know which was the happiest then, the mule or the 'possum, it surely wasn't I for I had to walk on home and back the next morning. I do not now remember how I "explained" this event to Mr. Ward, I hope I didn't make up a false tale, there had been tails enough and I got the worst end of all the tale tails, but was on time to open school on schedule. End of tale.

During the two and one half years we farmed while teaching at Belleville we began to use our own farm animals, first a little brown mule named Scott, a large red milk cow named Bess, the seller didn't tell me she knew how to let down a rail fence at the inside corner, I learned of this when grazing was poor in the lanes in the late summer and the young standing corn fields were inviting, green and luscious. She would go up to the inside corner where the rails were crossed alternately from one side to the other, raise her muzzle (she was tall enough to reach the top rail) and simply push off first the top rail on one side, then the next on the other side until the fence was low enough to step over. When she didn't come home I would go find her in a neighbor's corn field full of luxurious young corn. If I had not found her she would have felt too full to walk home and just lain down and spent the night in comfort to reap more the next day. Who could blame the cow? She could not reason that her bag would soon be dripping milk (she was a four gallon a day milk factory but couldn't realize this). I was a school teacher but not a cow teacher except by object lessons. So I proceeded into this field of teaching to impress upon her that she was not to trespass into green fields. So I went to the woods, found a forked small tree and from this made a neck yoke with a prong out in front and thought to thwart her prowess by preventing her getting close enough to the fence to accomplish her purpose. It didn't work. She simply turned the prong to one side and got over the fence again, yoke and tail. I found her again, driving her home again I thought up another device (I must be teacher enough to out-smart a cow, or lose out on my profession).

After milking and finishing supper that night I think and think for a long time - in fact most of the wee hours next morning. I came up with a scheme to tie her head down with a short chain to her front foot, so she could graze on the ground but could not raise her head and one foot off the ground. I made a halter with a ring on the band that circled her muzzle, also a leather band for the ankle of a front foot with another ring on the band, then a chain and snapper on one end. When she left the pen that morning she had another and different lesson which I assigned her when I dismissed her. It paid off, my lesson was well learned too. That a teacher must be able to teach himself by object lessons, if by no other way.

Now about the school at Belleville. I brought the brass hand bell to Belleville in the fall of 1915 and here I rung it the nth time and the last time "for books." I vainly wish I owned that brass bell now to pass it as a heritage of by-gone days, 1910 - 1917. But this cannot be.

Still I have a better heritage, not material, I'll probably leave nothing of note materially, only the rags.

My life has been rugged and perhaps could be termed very ragged but being unable to gather up the loose ends, I have left this to my Lord to obliterate by his blood and am as certain as His Word is true, that He has done just this.

TEACHER AND FARMER

Here I mixed farming with teaching. A few times I remember plowing from daylight till time to dress for the class room, and many a time arriving home from my day at school into the darkness of night, then eating my supper by the light of the Kerosene lamp. These were busy days but there was enough happiness in my work and in my home to offset the unpleasant hardships.

Top pay by the state then was $75.00 a month for the services of a First Grade Teacher. The county then had no county school tax. The trustees of schools had to assess a supplement from each pupil if the teachers were paid more. We were told then at the State Teacher's Association that the teachers of the State of Alabama on an average were paid less than it received for the lease of a convict (the state then had a system of leasing convicts to industry). How could teachers be expected to remain in the profession under prevailing circumstances? Many left the profession after obtaining Life Grade Certificates, I was one.

For the first two years at Belleville the patrons supplemented my salary and paid my accustomed salary of $100.00 per month. The third year they decided that since I was a land owner farmer and as they thought a permanent citizen, they also thought I could afford to keep my job for less money, so without consulting me they said I would have to do for only the $75.00 the State would pay and told me so. I signed the contract for the ensuing term to begin in September 1917. They knew I was renting out 15 acres to be farmed "on halves." This I had done from the beginning. So there was a notion that I was running a profitable business and didn't need a "big" salary, that I wouldn't leave them. This put me in a "pinch" or as I felt, a "bind."

I had passed the State Examination in July of 1916 for a Life Grade Certificate, without preparing for it in a summer college course. I did all my preparation on my own, being both Teacher and Student. I bought the two books on which the examination would be based. One was History of Education, a large volume, covering the subject from the dawn of learning in the distant past up to that present time. The other was a book on the subject of "Hygene and Heating of Public School Buildings" setting forth many badly needed improvements. The third subject required was a History of my personal experience during the six years I had taught under a First Grade Certificate. I spent many hard hours in private study on these two books, borrowing time from the plow or hoe handle. I had no hired hand for the work on the twenty acres. I was farming with one little mule, a six inch "Oliver Goober" turn plow and a Georgia Stock. Besides I had to get a saw hand to help me cut oak stove wood for our fireplace in the winter and cook stove

the year round. This consumed my saturdays, my summer vacation, even my hours before and after school, besides I had a cow to milk, churning and butter-making as well. My wife was unexperienced these first years and I did not burden her with the milking and churning. I made a good grade on my examination, because my wife took the book from me and had me recite chapter after chapter to her. She was truly my help-meet in every way and shared and joyed in my successes. She became the mother of our first baby, a boy, in November 1915. It was "Still-born" and buried by me and her father, Mr. John T. Wilson with only my tenant farmer Mr. John Bradley to help. Mr. Bradley dug the grave in Belleville Baptist Cemetery. Only we three were present. I kneeled by its casket while they stood beside the open grave. I prayed, not for the dead, but for the living. Within twelve months Mr. Wilson was dead at age fifty, before the death of his sixteenth and last baby was born. Tragedy was writing it's line. July of 1916 brought us a tropical hurricane and a crop failure. Nineteen seventeen we were swept into "World War One." My neighbor, a Civil War Veteran, who in the battle of Chancellorsville, learned first hand, the tragic death of his general, "Stonewall" Jackson. At our school house he registered ten of my 18 year old students, myself along with all in the district from eighteen and thirty five. I was twenty eight. My second son, John was born that year in July.

I had one child so was in Class B. However, due to all these circumstances I was overcome. My salary, reduced, a crop failure the previous year together with an unpaid $500.00 note, monthly payments on a mortgage for the $600.00 balance to Mr. Hinds. An offer to buy my house and land at a profit of $400.00 was too good to turn down. Besides all this we faced the certainty of being drafted if the war continued and knowing I could not leave my wife and baby so far distant from her people and mine we sold our equity in the farm in December of 1917.

I had no notion to board in the community to finish teaching the school, so the only reasonable alternative was to resign, which constituted a breach of contract. The school trustees were upset and said I could not resign. I resigned. This turned out to be the end of my teaching though I had a Life Certificate and was offered a school where I moved to in Baldwin County, Alabama.

SOME OF MY EXPERIENCE IN MY EDUCATION AND TEACHING OVER A PERIOD OF SEVEN YEARS 1910 - 1917

I attended public schools in our communities nearest our home. Herbert Public School two and a half miles from my fathers one horse farm in Conecuh County, from the age of seven (1896 to 1908) when I attained the age of seventeen years.

When there was no school in our public school district, I was sent by my father to any adjoining district where a school was in session, some times to Mt. Union district also two and one half miles from home in another direction. One session I attended at Old Town District seven miles from our home. But I stayed then with a sister who was married and lived about two and a half miles from Old Town at Herbert Post Office. This was sister Minnie Shaver. My teacher was Miss Essie Holowell from Brooklyn, she was my only teacher who was a member of the Church of Christ.

One three months of this period my father arranged with a friend of his, Mr. Green Williams, for me to board at his farm home near Red Level in Covington County and attend the only High School that I ever had an opportunity to attend. I must have been eligible to take the high school subjects then taught in the first high school year. Really I was at the time studying them in our grade school at Herbert. I had completed advanced arithmetic, spelling, advanced english grammar, geography, first principles of physics, and U. S. History. These last were the subjects I had already begun to study in our home two teacher grade school at Herbert.

When we got a teacher for our home school my father had me drop out of the High School, come back home and attend there. This however he did not know to be a mistake. I did not question his decision, being subject to him I came back and entered under a young lady teacher who had less schooling than I. She could not help me. Never complaining I continued to study and to learn on my own. I must have been about 15 years old at the time.

Then for the next year or two we had better teachers and they added composition and rhetoric and the course in physical geography, midevil and modern history (mainly the history of European Countries), their Kings, Kingdoms, systems of government, the feudal systems, etc., including their wars and another course in Alabama History. I learned to name all the counties in Alabama in alphabetical order, all the governors of Alabama in order of time, first to last, all this I recited from memory.

I remember most of the teachers by name, Mr. George Harper, Mr. Dock Miller, Miss Betty Shaver and Miss Kate Kendall. These last two taught private schools for which my father paid a fee of $2.00 per month. These were in the summer and lasted only one or two months.

I remember only three or four of my teachers who graduated from college. But all of them were required to pass State Examination and make passing grades of 75% or above. These four were Miss Katherine Perdue from Pensacola, her sister Miss Bessie Perdue succeeded her. Then there was, after them, Miss Dana Gatchell, Miss Bettie Blair and my last public school teacher was a maid whose name was Miss Rankin, then at age 60, from Monroville, Alabama in an adjoining county. Really she was well educated and a splendid teacher, but not by any measure a disciplinarian. She let pupils run away with misbehavior. I observed the teachers I have mentioned and one I have omitted by overlooking who belonged before these last mentioned, a Mrs. Long. She too failed to properly dicipline some unruly pupils. She let her laxity run rampant. One girl in the school, I could name but won't, fought back at her and got her by her hair and pounded her. None took sides and this might have been best for a general melee might have ensued.

I must not close this part of the account of my schooling without a word of worthy praise and thanks to my good parents who spared me from much farm work for me to attend school. I feel deeply indebted to them and really owe my early education to them.

At the end of the year 1907, my grade school attendance ended. Miss Rankin from Monroville, Alabama, my last teacher, had encouraged me to take the State Teachers' Examination coming up in January of 1908. So when I did not show up for school in January she told the other pupils she thought I had gone to Evergreen for the teachers examination. Some of them told me later that she was much disappointed when she learned that I had quit school and went to work as a clerk in the local Country General Store, Mr. Tom Hudson's, there at Herbert.

But working in this store was a continuation of my education because I made it so. I was getting some primary lessons in business dealings, honesty and attention to the cash business entrusted to me, the keeping of records, debts, bills, payment and collections. Besides this, when time permitted from keeping the store swept, dusted and all the merchandise in order, by promptness and diligence in using all my time, but not in idleness, I still found time to read and study. My main two text books for the next two years were the New Testament and a book containing the complete works of William Shakespeare. I bought the first, a Twentieth Century New Testament. I did much reading and studying in it and became familiar with the teaching and the writers of it. Being religious and having obeyed the gospel of Christ and believing Christ to be the only begotten Son of God at the early age of twelve. I had learned to sing in two singing schools in summers past when I was out of secular education. I liked to sing and was the main song leader of our singing group of young people. I was often at local singing gatherings in our community at the school house on many Sundays and many times in homes of neighbors in our community. Thus, too, I was continuing my education during these two years I worked as a store clerk.

The volume of Shakespear was given to me by a teacher, Miss Mary Clyde Prince from Salem, Alabama in Lee County. She taught at Herbert the next year (1908-1909) while I was a clerk at the store and boarded with my sister Minnie. We became close friends and spent some time together. Friday and Sunday evenings.

I had, all through my school years, been much a lover of good literature and trained myself to choose standard works of standard authors of whom I had a list of the best one hundred. From this list I had selected and bought many paper back books and read them with vigor and interest. While young in boyhood and young manhood I liked history, books historical, and having no teacher in literature I became my own teacher. I read extensively on the side while in public school. Then at the store while keeping, my duties caught up with, I devoted all spare time to reading Shakespear. When I found passages that appealed to me I set myself the task of memorizing them. Some of them I can now, at age 88, still recite, for example: "Sweet are uses of adversity, which like the toad, ugly and venemous; Wears yet a precious jewel in his head." This I interpreted, this jewel was his eye. Also, "Who steals my purse steals trash 'twas something; tis nothing but has been slave to thousands; But he who fetches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed."

I also learned from Shakespear that a man though much learned and high in esteem can also be vulgar. Though he couched his vulgarity at times in apparently noble, not vulgar language, the sensual thought was plain. I cannot praise him for his poem "Venus and Adonis," and would advise young people not to read it.

But his tragedies are counted classics. His historical plays are wonderful potrayals of the lives of men in their wickedness. And his comedy is unsurpassed.

I can yet name from memory many of the titles under which he wrote. Without trying to name all, here are some: Loves Labor Lost, Romeo and Juliet, As You Like It, "All is well that ends well," McBeth, Julius Caesar, The Twelth Night or What you will, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing, King Lear, The Comedy of Errors, Taming The Shrew, The Tempest and Poems too many to mention.

Religious books were my delight. Pilgrims Progress, In His Steps and One Book, Stories of the Bible made many lasting impressions that have stayed with me down to old age.

But this most supurb book to me has been and still is God's Book, The Bible. I have made it the book of my life because it is the book of life in Christ. No man is educated who has not imbibed its truths, its principles, its laws, its precepts, its commands and its promises. The will of the Father in it is that man hear His Son, in whom he is well pleased. By the words of His Son in it he will judge every man at the judgement, revealed in this book. All who truly live by that part of this book which applies to him will be blest by doing so and all who do not will not be blest at all. These words are a very limited comment on the wonders of this Book of Books.

After these two years of self study in the New Testament I made a decision which changed my whole life. I decided in December of 1909 to go back to school.

FIVE MONTHS AT HIGHLAND HOME COLLEGE
CRENSHAW COUNTY ALABAMA

Bro. George S. Clark came to Herbert some time in the fall of 1909. He talked to me after a worship service in the Herbert school house one night where he told about the Christian School at Highland Home where he was the teacher of math, physics and a course in surveying. He had a B.S. degree in engineering from Auburn Institute of Technology and was himself a Christian. At the close he gave me a catalogue.

I decided to spend the little I had saved of my salary of $20.00 a month for the two years as clerk in the Country Store at Herbert which totaled $125.00. With this I packed my clothes and books in a trunk. My father drove me, with my trunk, in the one horse wagon to Evergreen where I boarded the train for Montgomery. He didn't ask me how much money I had nor had I told him. I didn't write him from College to ask him for any money. During my three or four hour wait in Montgomery I walked for the first time up Dexter Avenue. I went for the first time, at age 20, into a picture show. The pictures were still, not movies, with some spoken words to relate what was being seen on the screen. I still remember what the two pictures were that I viewed. One was scenes of a tumble bug, much enlarged, bigger than turtles, showed their work of rolling a ball of manure, but I didn't notice the scene of the deposit of an egg in the ball. Then the scenes depicted the struggles he had. His hind feet rolling the ball uphill with his front feet on the ground pushing, both sets of his feet working, one on the ball and one set on the ground, all a backward motion, persistently successful in spite of the ball being lost to tumble a space down the grade, then recovered and the rolling resumed. This was a familiar procedure I had witnessed many times in the cow lot and along the dirt roads I had walked all the years to school. This picture was nothing new to me, not really educational unless I saw in it what I now see, that it was indeed a lesson in nature, of propagation of the species, for he deposited it in a hole he dug in the ground, the egg in the lump of the food he would consume in the process of the development of a larvae, then a pupa and into a bug like the worker who followed nature in nature's plan. This was also a good lesson in perseverance, overcoming difficulties and ending in the bugs determination to be successful. Maybe I got an inspiration to follow through to success in the venture I was embarking on at that time. Really though I did not see any such lesson in it because the humor in it appealed to me more vividly. You must remember the picture

industry in 1909 was hard put to find trained actors to produce interesting pictures to bring in money from the screen. I didn't philosophize thus at that time, but when I came out of the darkness inside that room I didn't know which way to go, but soon I found myself at a show window (something new to me then) and in it was a display of photographs and all at once I decided to spend some of my precious savings, so upstairs I went into a studio and had two exposures of my own image made. Then gave him the Highland Home Post Office for my address for him to send them by mail to me. These two originals I still have after these seventy six years.

I returned then to the L & N Station and boarded a train for La Pine, Alabama. It stopped at Sprague Junction where I waited for a local to La Pine. Sprague Junction had no station building so I had to sit on my trunk, which was set off the Main Atlantic Coast Line, and wait an hour for the local to come up from Troy and Luvern, turn around on the "Y" and head back. It was night before it left Sprague Junction but only a short way to La Pine where some one in a car (of all things, my first ride 1909) drove me the two miles out in the country to the College.

STATE TEACHERS EXAMINATION IN MONTGOMERY APRIL 1910

My classes began the next day and in April, when the State Teachers Examination was scheduled in Montgomery. Some of the students, young men, had planned to go there to take the examination. One of them asked me if I would like to go along with them. I decided I would and did. I spent two days, one on the examination for third (the lowest grade) the next for the second or middle grade. Returning to Highland Home I forgot or thought no more about the examination and was surprised to receive in the mail a Second Grade Teachers Certificate qualifying me to teach in the public schools of the State. Up till then I had no thought or plans to teach school.

When June came and with it the end of the spring term, as it was then called, I took my final college exams except on physics, which I was reluctant even to try to pass, knowing I had not mastered it in the class, not being diligent.

COLLEGE EXAMS MAY 1910 - I REVIEW PHYSICS AT HOME 1910

Bro. Clark tried to encourage me to go ahead and take the exam, but I still refused and left the room. I got no report from college but think I passed on the subjects I took. One on advanced arithmetic, on algebra through quadratics, plane geometry, Bible, first year Latin and composition and rhetoric. All these studies I had in school at Herbert, except physics.

So when I got back home I bought me a copy of Page's First Principles of Physics. I made me a table and mosquito net for flies, our farm home being unscreened. These thus protected in my little accustomed side bedroom. I became teacher and student of the state text book on physics. I assigned myself five chapters at a time, read and worked out the problems at the end of the chapters and

in a week or ten days finished my study of the subject. About this time I decided to attend a summer six weeks course at Southwest Alabama Agricultural College at Evergreen, the County Seat of my home County Conecuh. Prof. Liles was my teacher in math. Here I relate an incident in the Geometry class.

The class was sent to the blackboard. Each was assigned a theorem and while the class was starting to prove the problems assigned them, Prof. Liles relaxed, sat in an open window (it was summer time) and shot sparrows in the trees outside with a 22 rifle. Being a teacher in an Agricultural College he was at this time also teaching us a lesson in how to eradicate bird pests on the farm.

I was unable to state my theorem properly or work through to the proof and arrive at a Q.U.E.D. (which was to be proven). I called to him; "Prof. Liles, I am unable to prove my theorem, I missed it somehow." He came promptly and said; "I'll show you," but he failed also, as I had. So I left for my boarding home. That night I determined I would solve the problem and did, then handed it in to him the next morning. This was not bragging but perseverance like my tumble bug had done.

Really what I was doing was reviewing what or most of what I had already studied at Highland Home College except that I took a course in Pages Theory and Practice of Teaching. The only subject I had not taken there, also I attended a class on a book of the Alabama Law on Schools. I don't remember going to class, so I must have only received a copy of the laws and just read it on my own.

STATE TEACHERS EXAM AT EVERGREEN FOR FIRST GRADE CERTIFICATE

Before or at the end of these six weeks, maybe during this period, our County Supt. of Education was holding a State Teachers Examination in this College building in June of that year. So I took the opportunity to take this examination for a (highest) first grade certificate to teach school occupying a whole day for the examination. At the close of the exam, Mr. George Harper, the County Supt. of Education and one of my teachers in my boyhood offered me a two month's school for July and August. I accepted and signed my first contract to teach in my home county. My salary would be $40.00 per month.

At the close of this examination our County Supt. of Education, voluntarily and without request from me, presented me with a hand written recommendation in these words:

JULY 1910

I, George Harper, Supt. of Education of Conecuh County, heartily recommend Elliott Mancill to any position for which he may aspire.

Signed, George Harper

Up to the day I started to teach all my college attendance at Highland Home and at Evergreen was behind me in the first six months of the same year of 1910.

While teaching this first school and before it was finished, I received from the State Supt. of Education, John W. Abrecombie, my First Grade Teachers Certificate. So all my six years of teaching was done under a First Grade Certificate, the highest certificate required at that time to teach in the public schools of Alabama for life.

This school was at the Garvin School House, Garvin School District of Conecuh County, about six miles from our farm home, located across Simmons Creek from Mt. Union Community. The school house was in a virgin pine forest of giant long leaf pine timber. There was a dug well some fifty to seventy five yards away from the school house and the source of water supply for drinking from a wooden bucket and a single dipper for all to drink from. Sanitation as we know it now was unheard of, although a little later we were supposed to require each pupil to bring his own cup, a metal contraption that collapsed, one ring into another, so it could be carried in hand, pocket or lunch pail, also of tin or aluminum.

The house itself was of rough pine boards nailed up and down to sill and plate with batten over each crack between these boards. The roof was of pine boards hand made, quite good to keep out the rain. The floor was of the same pine boards, cracks between, nothing to cover the slightly open cracks to keep the air out. This was fine for a summer school but not so good for the cold winter wind. We did not need any heat in the one room school house but needed to keep the one door and four windows open for the flies and the hot air to enter. We had plenty of both especially gnats in the summer. The pupils were allowed some kind of a hand fan to knock gnats out of their eyes and mouth. They were persistent even to buzz about our ears.

Next the benches to sit on were also homemade of pine boards, flat and hard, sometimes rough and with splinters, they did have one narrow, four or six inches wide, across the back and high enough to strike the shoulder blades so a pupil would not fall through behind the bench, though some could arch their back rainbow fashion through the opening by sliding their seat forward on the seat of the bench. I had to tell one boy that his back was not intended to take the place of his bottom.

Then in this, my first school house arrangements for a board for all the pupils to practice writing at the writing lesson period, by nailing a slanting board onto the exposed posts on the two side walls. This was a wide pine board and was affixed to the wall high enough so the pupil could stand up to practice writing. It answered for a writing desk and the period provided a rest period from sitting on the flat board of the benches. So we see some good purpose in this thoughtful arrangement.

I soon found that I had a job sure enough. With forty pupils in one room and with eight grades, from beginners in the ABC's and to the late teenagers in grade eight and the other six grades between. By dividing the time carefully and loosing no time between classes for recitations (we called the class periods by this term) I managed to get around in the eight hour day to every pupil and to every class, giving them from five to twenty minutes each. Keeping them busy studying their assignments at the end of each class period and watching the behavior of them all as much as was possible, also helping individuals even during class. With the teacher there was no time to waste. We had a fifteen minute recess each morning and evening and a one hour lunch and play period. The day really got cut into many pieces, but none were wasted.

Beginning to teach under these circumstances, without any previous experience, practice or planning, was a monumental task. All I had learned was by observation of the plan and methods of some of the good teachers themselves when I was a pupil. This was really my only source of learning the theory and practice of teaching, but my book by Page had been of much use.

I had a boarding place this summer at the home of some good farming people, Mr. and Mrs. Coy Miller. They had a son and two daughters who walked with me the

two miles morning and evening to and from the school house. There was no house or settlement in sight of their school house. It was truly secluded in the midst of a wide and long pine forest. There was no store near enough to buy candy, gum or pencils and paper. Town and post office were miles away. My only break came once a week when my father drove his plow horse hitched to the buggy the six miles to take me home on Friday evening and bring me back to Mr. Millers each Sunday afternoon. The horse did the walking then. There is no visible sign left of the location of that school house. I venture to guess that even that dug well has been filled to keep animals from falling into it.

One other arrangement needs to be mentioned. There was a forest stream of clear cool water, out of sight from Mr. Millers house, where I could go each evening after getting home from school, where I could and did often go to take a bath in the pure cool flowing stream. God made this arrangement for me. It was a good one in the heat and sweat of July and August of 1910. Oh yes, and too, I had fresh okra for supper most every evening. I requested it be fried, for I did not like boiled okra, but best of all fresh peas and other vegatables. All this and a good bed was worth the price of $4 a month, 1/10th of my salary which I felt happy about then, for it was double my earnings the previous two years.

Before this first school ended, I got a surprise letter from brother George S. Clark at Higland Home. He had heard someway that I had a first grade certificate and had recommended me, without any request from me, to another brother in Christ, brother Sharp, County Supt. of Education of Chrenshaw County, who offered me a contract for a school in his county at a big increase in salary, $75.00 per month. I replied and accepted and he mailed me a contract which I signed and returned. My dear father and mother had labored on the farm without me and had to obtain a tenant farmer to cultivate a part of his land on shares, 1/2 the cotton and 1/4 the corn. He was then 56 years old and had sold his water gristmill and gin and the 40 acres it and his mill pond were on. They felt happy, no doubt for my success and ability. Their trust and sacrifice had not been in vain. Thus concludes the facts connected with my first two months in the teaching profession. I was soon to deserve the title of it. Behold, "Professor Mancill," a store clerk, no more. I now had most, at least over half, of the $125 I had spent, of my own money, on my education.

At this date December 31, 1976, 66 years later, I know of two of my pupils there in Conecuh County who are still living. Bonus (Garvin) McIntyre; also Otto McIntyre who was a pupil of mine at Herbert School where I taught in the winter of 1911-12, whom she married and her brother Jay Garvin both still living there in the same community where they lived in childhood where I taught my first school.

I had no problem of discipline in this school. All the pupils were model children, the two older ones, the Rawls girls were in their late 'teens and their last year in school.

MY SECOND SCHOOL - WINTER 1910-1911
CRENSHAW COUNTY ALABAMA - SEPT. TO APRIL

The date of this writing January 1, 1977 I had a short vacation from the close of my first school in 1910, August to the beginning of my second school in September 1910. I had not met the County Supt. of Crenshaw County. He had been a

teacher at Highland Home College some years before I was a student there. His name was S. H. Shark and he was a Christian a member of the Church of Christ. However, there was no congregation of the church near where I was to teach, one was at Saville and it was nearest. I borrowed a mule and buggy from my dear friend farmer in whose home I boarded. At Saville I preached my first sermon that year, 1910. Brother Charlie Landers was their regular preacher but on this occasion he was absent and I was asked to preach. I had to lead the worship services at Sardis near Highland Home that same year in the spring but had made no attempt to preach, so this time at Saville I had my first opportunity to preach in a public worship service. However, I had, when a small boy, played preacher with neighbor children when we played together in the woods. Then a log upon which I stood was my pulpit and all girls were my audience but I am sure the angels in heaven must have heard what I had to say and may have recorded my words spoken in my innocence then. At present I remember nothing I said in my prayer or my sermon, but the little girls, one of my cousins and Lila Kelley, one of them, is still living at 86 and very well remembers that I both prayed and preached. Nor do I now remember any part of my sermon at Saville, subject or content. I do remember that I was invited to dinner with the Rogers sisters both old maids and younger brother Harry was there. I met him again fifteen years later when he was preaching at Foley, Alabama at the Christian Church there. I'll tell of this later.

This is a digression from my subject of teaching and belongs with my subsequent account of my religious experiences.

Back now to my second public school. My father or my sister Essie must have driven me to Evergreen with my same trunk in our one horse wagon to board No. 1 L & N train for Montgomery again and this time for my destination to Petrey via the same Sprague Junction, where I arrived after dark. I had written ahead to one of the school trustees telling when I would arrive. He was there to meet me.

We loaded my trunk onto his two seated topless "surry" drawn by two small mules. It was six miles out in the country over dirt roads to his farm home in the school district, Old Providence, and he told me I was to board in his home.

We arrived there about an hour and a half later and my host and hostess were to be Mr. and Mrs. Sam Spradley. Mrs. Spradley had supper on the table and was waiting for us. One item I can never forget for our supper, though all others I have forgotten, but not so of the gravy. The gravy was in a deep crockery bowl, about five inches deep and filled nearly to the brim with just a little brown crumbs in the bottom and to my memory about as greasy on the outside as on the inside. Somehow in handling it I let it slip to one side, the contents all spilled out on the table and a liberal portion poured off onto my lap. No doubt I was the greasiest school teacher, the most reckless as well as the youngest they had for a teacher. I certainly was not a model for table manners. I was deeply embarrassed and deeply oiled up that Saturday night and ready for business come Monday morning. Later I learned Mr. Spradley had told the County Supt. he thought Mr. Mancill was really too young for a school teacher. I am not sure he did not tell brother Sharp that I was too greasy to teach school, which was nearer the truth.

His six year old son was one of my beginners and I was almost as much a beginner as was his little boy. I saw this beginner two years ago at his home in Platsburg. He remembered me only by my name and that I was his first school teacher. I had a very pleasant visit with him and his wife in their nice home.

Old Providence school house was set on the top of a rather sloping rocky knoll and made me liken it mentally to Golgotha, for this knowl sloped away in

every direction from the ancient school building, "in the shape of a skull."

This building was very similar in construction to the one I had recently left in Conecuh County. One room, walls, floors with even more open cracks. The main difference, this one had a chimney with an open fire place at the end fartherest from the blackboards. Another notable improvement was a rostrum floored with tounge and groved four inch flooring with a teachers desk and chair. There was also a pile of pine firewood outside for the fireplace. This was prophetic of winter and 10 degree colder weather here than in my county a hundred miles farther south. When colder weather arrived, in November, I asked the trustees for a wood burning heater to be installed in the center of the large room, and they complied. In the real cold weather in January both the fireplace and the heater did not keep it warm to any comfortable degree.

Both this and my first school were one teacher for eight grades and forty pupils. Here, there was one difference, the fact that I had gained in a measure by having previous experience. It was also a mile closer from my boarding home with Mr. and Mrs. Sam Spradley, a farmer also one of the three trustees. The Alabama school law required the school patrons in each school district to select three men to serve as trustees, to supervise in all matters relating to the school. At that time each district had the obligation to furnish the land and to construct the school buildings and defray the cost. No funds were available from the county school fund, all tax money was for the county school supt. and teachers salaries. His office was in the county court house.

My contract was for five months beginning the latter part of September and my salary here was $75.00 per month, which was almost double that for my first school. My board was also higher, $6.00 per month.

There had been a cyclone in this community which had done much damage to many homes. At Petrey on the railroad the town had been almost completely destroyed. I was informed of this early after my arrival and the trustees told me to dismiss the pupils if any storm clouds indicated dangers. Every farm home had a storm pit dug in each yard near their houses, but no pit was provided at the school building. Fortunately there was no storms that session.

There were forty pupils and eight grades here. For the most part they were very well behaved, obedient, some were exceptionally fine pupils especially the older ones. This made discipline easy for me. There were only two occasions when punishment was needed.

I made an example of the first offender and left a good impression that I would require obedience. This pupil had done no wrong, but had, by one specific act, I had plainly told him not to do at a time when he had need to prepare a lesson he was neglecting.

The other one that needed discipline was for fighting between two sixth grade boys. The trouble had occurred at the afternoon recess and I had passed up the investigation for the next day. Then, when school was dismissed one of the boys just behind the other swung his tin dinner pail and struck the boy from behind on top of his head a severe blow. The bottom rim of his pail cut through the scalp of the other and split the scalp bringing a profusion of blood. I did not keep them, but allowed them to go on home, because the injured boy needed attention to his wound, but I told them I would see to it the next morning. It was probable these two families were "at odds" and if not, now they surely would be, especially if I should neglect my duty, as responsibility was upon me. Consequences followed fast which I here relate to show what teachers sometime get involved in.

That afternoon, at my boarding home I went to a plum grove near the house, selected two good young plum sprouts growing from the sod, as near alike to be identical, trimmed and set them aside to take with me to school next morning.

When I opened school the next morning I "opened court" before all the school. I'll call them Jim the bucket wielder and Joe the injured one.

Jim was one of six children from his family, all of who were present. Joe, the injured one, had no brother or sister, he was a loner.

Jim's older sister informed me that her father sent me word not to whip Jim and that if I did he would take all six of his children out of school. The smallest, a girl and a beginner, was so happy in school and so dedicated to me her teacher, I knew she truly loved me with a deep childish love, she cried.

What was I to do? Give in to this father's upholding his 13 year old son in wrong doing or do my duty as a state employee to exercise discipline in my school.

My decision was forthcoming. Despite his instructions to all his six children to come home that day if I punished Jim, I called up before all. "Them that sin rebuke before all that others may fear." 1 Tim. 5:20

I dismissed all the pupils except two of the oldest, Dave and Fletcher Spurlock, brothers and of course Jim and Joe. I wanted two reliable witnesses. I told all the others to remain on the school ground.

First to be called up for his punishment was Jim the principal offender. I said to him "Jim, if you had not struck Joe on the head with your lunch pail and cut his scalp as you did by advantage from behind, I might have dismissed your fighting on the school ground with light punishment, but this is more serious and deserves more serious punishment, so stand forth now and take your just desert." He did and I did what I felt to be my bound duty. I counted the lashes with my switch telling my witnesses to count and judge with me the severity. I then dismissed Jim and told him he could go out on the playground but not to leave the school ground. Then I called up Joe and gave him the same number of whip lashes, counting them and was careful to maintain the same severity.

By the time I had finished with Joe, some of the pupils came in and told me Jim was leaving for home. I went to the door and told the boys, "Some of you overtake him and get him to come back." They did and succeeded.

I rang my bell for all to form lines, girls in one row at the door steps, the boys, on a parallel row in another line, ordered the girls line first and the boys line to follow. This was my accustomed procedure. All seated, I proceeded with my usual daily duties as if nothing had happened.

The older girl of Jim's family then reminded me of her fathers orders for all six of them to get their books and all come home. I calmly said to them and to all the school how the Alabama school law stated that all pupils were under the authority of their teacher each day from the time they left home until they arrived home at the end of each school day. So you see by this law I am now in authority over you and not your father. The words "loco parentis," (in place of parents) is in this law. So if your father wanted you at home today, he should have kept you there and should not have sent you away to come to school, just to see if he was in authority instead of the teachers. His authority ended when you left his premises. You are here in school today and must stay until I dismiss you along with the other pupils at 4 p.m. That understood I started that days teaching.

But this was not the end. Their father sent their mother over to my boarding place when their children got home that afternoon with some threats to injure my

body. She told me that her husband was raging mad over what he heard from the children and that she had come to keep him from coming to wreak his vengeance on me.

I kindly told this mother that I appreciated her coming in his place to spare me some dreadful calamity. She then informed me that her husband intended to meet me at the crossroads the next morning and beat me up anyway. I told her that I would be glad for him to meet me then and there if he would and that I greatly desired to have a long talk with him. Then I proceeded to talk with her then and alone. This is a gist of the trend of my talk with her. "Mrs. --------- if you take sides with your son and uphold him in wrong doing you will be encouraging him to do as he pleases through life and in all probability he will end up in prison before he comes of age. I advise you to tell your husband to this effect and that if we let this matter stand as it is it can be forgotten and settled. There need be no more mention of it. I also advise you to keep your children in school. They are indeed fine children, all, and are learning well in school. I will be a good teacher to them just as I have been up to now and show no partiality toward them. I will love them and give them no cause not to love me. I will love you, also your husband and hope he can overcome his hatred of me." With this she turned to leave me but with a warning that he would meet me next morning.

But he didn't meet me as I expected and hoped he would. She must have told him my attitude and some of what I had said to her. Still he kept his children out of school for the one remaining month of the school, but before I left the community he sent me word by someone (I have now forgotten who) that he felt ashamed of his reactions and asked forgiveness. This pleased me greatly. I regret to say that my prediction concerning Jim were fulfilled - that Jim was later indeed in prison. I had no opportunity to visit him during his imprisonment nor did I ever mention this affair until now.

But best of all, I did after over sixty years visit a brother of his in Montgomery and he took me to Jim's home there to see him then a bed patient paralized, but knowledgable. He and his wife were very happy to have me in his home, and I was glad to see him again alive and gladly volunteered to pray at his bedside, for him and his family in their sorrow. God hears prayer.

I visited him in his home. Since my visit he has passed from this life.

Lately I met his brother back at the site of Old Providence School House. The school house is gone only the cemetery adjacent and the one church building remains. This brother of "Jim" was at the cemetery on a Saturday mowing around the grave sites. He showed me Mr. Sam Spradley's site and stone. He had lived to age 96. His brother, Gus Spradley, was the father of "Joe" in this case. The brother of "Jim" lived in Montgomery and was younger than the six in school in 1910, so had not attended my school. But he was happy to meet me and gave me his address in Montgomery and insisted that I stop by and visit him and his wife as I was to go by Montgomery anyway on my way home in Mobile. I promised him I would and did. I found his home and waited for him to come home. When he came he took me to his brother Joe's home. "Joe" was a victim of paralysis, but could speak. He very well remembered me and told me so. I met his wife who was his nurse also and I talked with them. They requested that I pray at his bedside, I did, and together we asked God to forgive all of us for any wrongs we had done. They appreciated my visit and it also relieved me and we forgave each other, then parted.

I must not omit another unpleasant event while teaching at Old Providence in

Crenshaw County Alabama. There were many others, too many to mention. This one has to do with my health and happened in January when after returning from the holiday vacation. I had contracted a severe chest cold due to exposure and bad weather during one of my four visits to Baldwin County to pay respect to the young christian girl I had first met the January preceeding when I had entered Highland Home College.

When I got back to my boarding place to resume my school, the first Monday in January 1911, I was really sick with this cold in my chest. The severe cold spell had become worse, though sick, I felt I must go to my work that Monday morning. It was drizzling rain and the rain turned to Ice on my umbrella. I had on "rubbers", overshoes and a thin overcoat. In these I trampled the mile and a half to the school house, it had overhead ceiling but none on the four walls. The pile of pine wood in the yard was frozen over covered with ice. There had been no fire in the house, the chimney fireplace, nor the wood heater for all the week of vacation. I cut "splinters" for kindling, carried in the ice covered wood in my arms, built fires in the fireplace, which drew the heat up and out the chimney, fired up the stove which did radiate some of the heat into the room, but the cracks in the floor let in enough cold air to dissipate even that little heat. There was no way to feel any of that little heat, only to stand near the heater and turn first one side then the other.

Now I can see, I had a job on which I put more importance (I was dedicated to it) than I did upon my body comfort, my health. There was only a few pupils present. If I had used a little forethought I would have said, "We will all go back home," but that never occurred to me. I stuck it out for my full eight hours, then on the way home I took with a hard "chill", if you know what that is, the result of congestion in my lungs. The room was cold when I got home, I had some wood in the "wood box," with this I kindled a fire, sat by trying to thaw out. I soon went to bed and Mrs. Spradley piled on the covers and put a hot water jug to my feet. I shook for a long time and finally got warm enough to go to sleep. Next morning I had a high fever and Mr. Spradley drove in the cold six miles to Petry to summon a Doctor Abrecombie. He knew at once that I had pneumonia.

Then for seven days my life was in the balances with death. The first question the doctor asked me, "Do you smoke cigarettes?" I said, "No, sir." He then said, "I have another patient who has pneumonia, he does and I am doubtful of his recovering. In your case I am encouraged and will do all I can to help you recover." I was encouraged by this and by my excellent attendants at my bedside including these two brothers, Dave and Fletcher Spurlock, who alternated to sit with me each night, attend to my needs, give me the medication by the doctors instruction. Also Mrs. Spradley who was so dilligent to do all she could for me, prepare what food I was allowed to eat, prepare woolen cloths saturated with tallow turpentine, et. al., keep, these hot and on my chest continuously. All my pupils except one girl, of all my pupils, came in to visit and see how their school teacher was, if better or worse. The one girl I mentioned was Missouri Holloday and she had an aversion to seeing anyone sick. But Mrs. Spradley, not to my knowledge, asked my doctor if she should call my parents back home to tell them of my serious condition. He told her to do this and she did. So the next day she got a message by 'phone (they had no 'phone) and to my most happy surprise they came on the following day, by buggy driving his little mule Dixie all the way from Conecuh County, across Butler and Lownes Counties' dirt roads to reach me. This was the greatest of all to raise my spirits. My dear mother had been with me many times

along through babyhood, childhood, boyhood and young manhood when I had malarial fever so many times year after year. Now she was with me far from her home after two days trip by buggy, no doubt full of anxiety and with hope and prayer, and to my dear kindly, patient and loving father with all his Christ-like love and sympathy prayers for my recovery. Tell me, who could die so young with all this love, care, concern and prayers? Mother was left to stay until I was well and able to go home with her, while Father returned home riding all these miles alone to get back to his little farm and his work in the fields to get in his spring crops.

Together these two noble and dedicated mothers tried all ther known remedies that they, by long experience, knew might help and that their skillful hand knew so well how to prepare.

They anointed my body with oils and all the ointments they thought might help. First one remedy then another to help break up that congestion in my lungs. They tried prepared mustard from the drug store, it failed to burn my chest, then they got from their seed supply a batch of raw mustard seeds. These they pounded up in a rag, beating them into pulp with a hammer on a block of wood. This pulp they spread on a wool cloth, applied it to my chest with a hot wool folded cloth over it. They got results right away. I was soon complaining of burning. The mustard had really worked and I stood the heat until it got through my breastplate of skin, flesh and bones until it reached my lungs and put the bugs on the run. On my seventh day I made a change for the better.

My doctor had prescribed real creosote concentrated, mixed three drops as a dose in solution to mix and dilute it. I could very well taste and smell the familiar odor. The doctor told what it was and warned not to get any full strength on the skin, and said it would burn the skin off. The mustard plaster made the skin on my chest red but it did not blister, but would have if let stay on any longer.

Somehow the news of my illness reached Miss Lee Wilson. I must have written my sweetheart, Miss Lee Wilson, as soon as I was able, this I cannot recall. Anyway, she sent me by mail a box filled with fresh picked violets and with their sweet scent. You may easily believe what a pleasing surprise and can only guess what joys and memories it brought me. Although my recent visit to her home during that holiday season was still fresh in my memory this precious concern for me refreshed all the more and added wonderfully to my uplifted spirits to recover.

As soon as I was able to walk and after my doctor's last visit, when he brought me a prescription from the drug store and charged it on my drug bill, he left me a half pint of whiskey with instructions to my mother to see that I took a small glass of toddy twice a day for two weeks. This, by the way was the first and the last strong drink that I ever paid for in my whole life up to this good day, 1977-1911=66 years ago.

I left Petrey with my mother. Mr. Spradley drove us in his two mule surry to meet the Atlantic Coast Line Train to go home for two weeks after my two week bout with pneumonia.

I lost this whole month of January 1911 from my school contract. So starting over February 1st, Monday, I added one month to my school term and finished out a total of five months. The last month of this school I admitted a married lady who was teaching in an adjoining district, whose contract had expired. She came to my school to review subjects she would have to be examined on to raise her teachers certificate to the next higher grade. I helped her all I could from time I was due to all my regular pupils. I learned later that she passed the examination she was preparing for. This was purely voluntary on my part, for no one over 21 years of

age (that was my age at the time) was eligible for free public school attendance. I broke their law again in my last school also in my school in Coffee County in 1913-14. I will close this memory of this school by saying that brother S. M. Sharp, Supt. of Education for Crenshaw County at my request in 1916, when I took the State Teachers' Exam., for Life Grade, wrote me a recommendation, one of three required, stating that Elliott D. Mancill had taught the best school of any in his county while he was County Supt. of schools. Here in this connection I will state that the other two recommendations which the law required for a Life Grade Certificate was one from brother William Stapleton, in reference to my character, who had known me from our days in Highland Home College in 1910 until 1916; the other was from a lady whose name I don't now recall. She was the principal of the first High School at Castleberry in Conecuh County. I had been associated with her as an instructor in our yearly County Teachers' Associations where she had learned of my success as a teacher at Belleville, Alabama, near Castleberry in Conecuh County.

MY THIRD PUBLIC SCHOOL AT HERBERT, ALABAMA WHICH WAS MY OWN HOME SCHOOL FROM BOYHOOD WINTER 1911 - 1912

Back home from Crenshaw County and my second successful school, to my third school in my home county, Mr. George Harper, one of my own first teachers and over many years as our home County Supt. of Education gave me the two room school at Herbert where I would be teaching many of the same pupils I had attended school with, some only a few years younger than I.

Here I had my first assistant teacher Miss Viela Lott, with whom I had attended school. I think this was her first experience teaching. I gave her the five lower grades and added the 9th grade to the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. This my first time to teach some high school subjects, 1st year Algebra, Plane Geometry, Latin, 1st year and maybe Composition and Rhetoric. I had only two students in the 9th grade.

I had only minor difficulties in my work as teacher. But at this school again I had a similar experience in discipline as that I had in the spring of the year at Old Providence in Crenshaw County, with two early teen boys for fighting. Here my trouble was, if anything could be, worse than the other. Both happened in the last part of the school year. One in the spring of 1911, this one in the spring of 1912.

Here I knew both the families of each one, also I had known both boys from childhood. Both had the same surname, their fathers being kin in some way I didn't know about.

These two fathers were of the same dispositions, fractious, irritable, daring and easy to become enraged over minor things. Also vicious and both put their trust in a sharp pocket knife as their only weapon. They were always ready and not afraid to use their knives at the least provocation. Their farms joined by only a cross fence between at the back side, one farm on one road the other on another. They seemingly were never friendly and perhaps even hated one another.

An occasion occurred when they were together, one of them disputed a statement by the other, and one called the other a liar in the words, "You're a liar," both of them out with their knives and went together slashing each other, making two

serious wounds on each, a brother to one of them dared go in between and pushed them apart, both quickly bled enough to weaken themselves down. Fortunately, a doctor was present and witnessed what happened. His office too was at hand, they were both taken in at the same time and he saved them from bleeding to death in his office.

All this happened at Herbert near the store where I had recently worked two years. I was not at the store when it happened and was not a witness to it. I don't recall just how it happened when I was away, but it must have been that I was on a trip to Evergreen to pick up a load of freight. I often made such trips every few weeks while working there. One of the injured men was a brother of the man who owned the store where I was employed. I very well remember visiting both men in their homes where they lay for some time where the doctor visited and attended their wounds. Both men were my friends at this time.

So their sons were in my room in the 7th grade the year I taught there. This proved to become unfortunate for me. Because the fathers of each were bitter enemies now after their fight together. It was but natural for these sons of theirs not to be on friendly terms with each other. Of all misfortunes, I their neighbor and friend to both had to happen to be their teacher this next year there at the home school of all of us.

I was not, however, present on the school ground when these two boys got into a fight together, but I was the unfortunate teacher of them both, so it became my duty to correct their wrong doing. I felt that I could not pass my duty up and ignore it, but maybe it would have been best to do just that, but to have a good conscience, I could not do so.

The one father whom I deemed to be the worst of the two, did not wait for me to take action. Knowing it would be my duty to punish both boys, that very night after the fight he sent me word or told a brother-in-law of his (because I had told the boys it was my duty to punish them and doubtless his son had told him of my intention to whip both boys.) As I say he told of his intentions toward me. This brother-in-law of his, when I passed his house first on my way to school the next morning, called to me to stop me and tell me that this boys father had threatened to cut my insides out if I should whip his boy, also told him he would meet me on the road just a short way ahead and would do just that because I had said I intended to punish them both.

I was on my way to my job. I had no protection from him except my agility to keep out of his reach. Sure enough he came leading his plow mule to meet me on the road. I was alone but I walked on and met him as if I had never heard of his intention to cut me. When he met me, or I should say, when we met each other, I spoke to him saying "Good Morning Mister ----------," at this he called my name, not saying "good morning," but "I hear you intend to whip my boy." I replied, keeping my eyes on him and some little distance from him. "Well Mr. Hudson, I am the teacher of your school and an employee of the State of Alabama and paid by the State to do my duty in teaching and keeping order and discipline in my school and if you don't want your boy to obey me and submit to discipline it will be best for you to keep him at home and you do the job of disciplining him. I won't object to this if this suits you best, but if you send him to school, while he is there, I will teach him good behavior and to be peaceable with all the other pupils. I plan to investigate what has happened between these two boys and it will be my duty to punish them both as I see is appropriate and necessary."

This calmed him down at the time and I proceeded on toward my job and he went on to his job plowing.

But this was not the end of it. This day the other boy was absent. His uncle, for whom I had kept store the two years previous, had his nephew to drive him in his new car to Evergreen. So the outraged father had his son at home another night without a whipping. But the next day they were both back in school. I proceeded with my duty, investigated by these two and other pupils who had witnessed their fight and decided on punishing them, and had some boys older than they stay in to witness, I counted, and told others to count the twenty stripes as I administered them and to judge of the severity toward each, my intention was to show the same to each boy. That done, I proceeded with my teaching duties, the boys returning to their homes after school was dismissed.

The next morning I must need pass the home of the complaining father and lo, he walked out of his yard gate, one hand in his pocket, doubtless to my mind, with an open knife in his hand, right out to join me on the road. I kept walking and he too walked along beside me. All the while I watched him out of the corner of my eye. I spoke to him again "Good Morning, Mister --------." First thing he said was, "Elliott, my boy said you whipped him worse than you did the other." What he really wanted was for me to speak harshly and make a strong denial, and maybe say, "Thats a lie," but if so he was disappointed. I just said, "I punished both boys with the same number of lashes and with the same severity as nearly as I could determine. He walked with me the mile and a half all the way to the school house. I talked all along the way in a calm voice and in a conscilatory manner, never showing any fear or uneasiness. I am sure he wanted me to raise a brawl with him so he would have an excuse to attack me, but I gave him no back talk, no daring statements, so did not provoke him at all. This all turned out completely in my favor.

But I learned later from some who knew that he bought his boy a good knife and instructed his boy that if I ever attempted to whip him again or if the other boy ever fought with him to cut us both or either one to kill us, or he would whip him himself.

The abrupt providential ending of my school, as related in the following paragraph, I take as God's providence in my favor. Because if I had continued to teach this school, which I would surely have done if the school house had not been damaged, the only other thing that could have kept me from finishing the term would have been to be physically unable to continue.

So had I taught on and as is likely these two boys continuing in school, serious consequences could have occurred to triger a worse situation.

In conclusion regarding this school at home, it was pleasant, rewarding and enjoyable, with the one exception related in some but not all detail, truly as it occurred.

However, I must relate that I did not finish my contract here in respect to time. Because a tornado like wind came a month before the time was out, which damaged the two story building, breaking apart the opposite corners and even upsetting some blocks under it so that it was unsafe for use. Repairs on it were contracted, but a disagreement arose over a proposal to take it down, move it to a more suitable and more nearly central location in the district. This was brought up to the County School Board. A decision was reached to hold an election by the registered voters in the district to settle the question of relocating the building. Unfortunately for me I was one of the qualified voters in my home district, which turned out to be unpleasant to me to have to take sides and part in this district election.

This same summer of 1912 some of my family, a brother-in-law and other friends

of his, who favored keeping the school house in the same location, urged me to run in the upcoming county election that spring and fall for the office of County Supt. of Education. My former employer, owner of one of the local country stores, was especially insistant on me doing so. I was weak enough against their urging and their promises to help me, and they had much influence in politics in the county, that I gave in to their pleas and agreed to enter the race for the primary in May or June and the final election in November. So I entered and qualified and canvassed the county from April through May and June 1912.

There were four candidates in the primary race and I ran second, one teacher R.E.L. Key of Castleberry led over me, so we had a run off for the November Election, between Key and myself.

In the interval between the primary and the general election, I decided to attend a summer quarter. I attended the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa for eight weeks, July and August 1912. This I did and took up a course in Physics, one in Phycology, and one in the Theory and Practice of Teaching. I enjoyed my classes, the study books, my teachers, Dr. Whitting in Physics, Dr. Dodson in Education, but I have not remembered the name of my Phycology teacher but remember reading the book and perhaps a smattering of what I read in it. I happened to board in a boarding house off campass across a hill or two and a steep hollow west of the campass. Dr. Denny was president of the University and I was to listen many times to the Denny chimes in the Denny Tower and to visit the home of the Doctor who stamped out yellow fever in the Panama Canal Zone, also Smith Hall the Natural History Museum and make accuaintance with Dr. Smith himself who was at the time Curator of the Museum. When he learned I lived near the Sepulga River in Conecuh County, he wanted me to explore its shoals and gather for the Museum specimens of bi-valves and uni-valves in hopes of finding a new specie of fresh water muscles. This I did about which I will tell farther on in my memoirs.

Here at the U.A. I was happy to meet County Supt. of Education Mr. S. M. Tharp of Bay Minette, Baldwin County. He was there for a course for Educating Supts. We boarded together, and no doubt if I had thought and asked for a school in Baldwin County he would very likely given me a contract in the County where my dear sweetheart lived. Maybe my reason was that I had, before I met Mr. Tharp, already met Bro. N. A. Jones, one of my teachers at Highland Home College, and he had recommended a school to me in Coffee County, Alabama, and I had written Supt. C. H. Byrd at Enterprise offering to teach the school. Brother Jones heard he was looking for a good teacher for one at Batten's Cross Roads.

Then, before my summer course at the U. of A. was over, perhaps two or three weeks away, I got word from my brother-in-law, Bill Shaver at Herbert, urging me to come home for the school election in August. They had counted up the voters on both sides on the proposal to relocate the building and found they were equal in number, not counting me, and said I must come without fail for I held the one vote that would decide the issue. Of course, really , I had no preference in the matter but he and Mr. Tom Hudson were very anxious on the side not to relocate it. So to my sorrow later, but I did not foresee then what would happen politically to me if I did, so without thinking through I left College, went home and voted on the side to keep the school house where it was, which to me, seemed the right thing to do. So I voted and the school house was not relocated.

Nor did I return to finish my summer courses at the University. I cannot conclude this report without relating one other event at the University at Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

As I mentioned above of meeting up with brother N. A. Jones who was a christian, a preacher and as I judged a good one and loyal to the way of truth and the bible. So being myself deeply wishing to attend the worship services at the Church of Christ across the river from down town Tuscaloosa, the only one I knew of then in the area, I asked brother Jones to go with me from University to Tuscaloosa about three miles distance. He consented to go and we met and walked the distance there. On our way he said something to me which strongly indicated to me that he was not loyal to the ancient order. He said to me that he did not think that instrumental music in the worship of the Lord was something not fitting or undesireable. Little did I know when I paid his way from Ozark Alabama to Perdido Alabama to come to Blackshear to perform our wedding ceremony in 1914 that a little later he had left the Church of Christ to preach in Ozark Alabama for the Methodist Church. To me this means he loved popularity and filthy lucre more than he loved Christ and his way. I never heard of him anymore. I did however see him before this, early in the summer of 1911, when I made a trip as a salesman to Dale County where and when he was editor and publisher of the county newspaper in Ozark. This was a year before I met him at the University. Possibly he had already left the church to preach for the methodists. Knowing him as I had, when he preached once in a while at the Church of Christ at Highland Home, when he was teaching in the college there, a man who can fit into any doctrine but won't preach the truth is undoubtedly not faithful in anything.

Returning now to my political venture, I will relate briefly that the one legged man on crutches out ran me in the run off election in the county of my birth, defeating me by nineteen votes, all of which, I could count on the side of the voters who were defeated in the local election to relocate our school house voted against me in the run off of the election. Defeating me out of revenge, certainly not because they had any other real reason to vote and work against me, actually telling falsehoods which they made up to defeat me. This, however, I have ever since counted as a good fortune to me. I continued my teaching profession until I was forced out at the end of seven years.

I must say of my third school at home, Herbert my home county. I did my first teaching in a two room, two teacher school and in the position of principal, in which roll I remained to the end of my short career. Another item, deserves mention, my salary in this school was the good one of $100.00 dollars per month, at which it remained until the last year, December 1917.

MORE DETAILS OF MY FOURTH AND FIFTH SCHOOLS AT BATTEN'S CROSS ROADS, COFFEE COUNTY, ALABAMA 1912-13 AND 1913-14

This school was six miles south of Enterprise, between there and Coffee Springs. Mr. C. H. Byrd, the County Supt. of Education, had his office in Enterprise, a prosperous town in a prosperous farming section. There were three large cotton gins and one cotton seed mill. Here cotton seed was processed into oil and meal, owned by Mr. Sessions, who also had a large mercatile store. I remember walking past his store, seeing him, a large stout man past middle age. His products "Sessions Cotton Seed Oil" and cotton seed meal was sold all over the south.

Batton Road School 1913-1914

I had a contract for one school year as principal of a three teacher school. Actually my contract was for seven months at $100.00 per month. I arrived early in September two weeks before opening date. My boarding place had been arranged prior with Mr. Charlie Harrell and wife Nina. They had one little girl, preschool age, who came to love me and wave me goodbye every morning when I was leaving for school.

I spent these two weeks walking from home to home of all the school patrons. I found most of the men in the fields white with cotton from hand picking their cotton. This was a familiar scene to me from early childhood.

I met many of the pupils and learned of some unpleasant experiences of the teacher who taught the year before. One occasion, he had a fight with one of the oldest boys and in the struggle they had broken the glass in the front door, and the whole school stampeeded and went to their homes, afraid to go back. I did not ask for details but learned the teacher was dismissed, fired, but the good news to me was that big boy would not be back for my school, but a younger brother would. This brother "wore a chip on his shoulder" and I had some trouble with him the second year.

On the first day of school, I enrolled the pupils by name and grade and had just finished when I took a hard "chill." I was unable to walk to my boarding home so I asked the Batten boy, who lived near the school house to take me home in their buggy. There was no telephone near so Mr. Harrell had to drive to Enterprise to summon a doctor. I was in bed, the chill had abated in the hour and a fever had begun before Dr. Harrison arrived. He asked me how was it that I had come down with Malarial fever when there was no malaria in their area. I told him it had been years since I had it in my boyhood.

He measured me out and filled capsules of quinine and instructed me to take one every four hours until my ears began to ring and left me medication for fever. I was in bed two days. He made another visit and told me not to go back until the next week. This was the end of my malarial, it has never recurred. This was the beginning of an acquaintance with a fine doctor and a good Christian man, a leader in the Church of Christ where I attended worship for these two years. A very happy acquaintance had began. Here at worship I also formed a bond of Christian fellowship with brother Rabon Reece from Fort Deposit and congregation at Liberty in Lowndes County. Brother Reece had graduated at Highland Home College before I attended there and was at that time editor of a weekly newspaper published at Enterprise. He was perhaps also owner of the business. I am not sure.

My school work was resumed and all went well throughout this first year. I took an active part in the community activities. I had no love affair at any time during my school work anywhere. I purposely avoided this but I was friendly among and toward all the young and the old in every community where I taught.

My assistant teachers here were excellent teachers and fine young ladies, above twenty. Miss Bessie Collins was a talented organist. We had a lot of music and singing in which I had some training and ability. We had concerts on occasions and public entertainments, plays on stage, etc. I often played parts. Miss Bessie had a sweetheart but was not married until the close of the second school year. This same was true of me, but my courtship was by weekly correspondence to a post office far away, to wit, Blackshear, Alabama, in Baldwin County.

Only one time did I walk home with one young lady from one of our last entertainments, near the end of the second year. She was a very refined one, and the oldest of three sisters in a very respectable family, named Crowe. They lived

a mile from the school and I passed their home daily to and from school. I knew to be discreet and careful and to maintain a good reputation worthy of the respect of all my patrons.

Only one time did I have the experience of one of my pupils show ways of attraction to me. I had to avoid and ignore it. This was at Old Providence, where I was also held in high esteem by all. One time there, at Old Providence, I was called upon to conduct a funeral. No one assisted me. I preached and sang as I well remember, "Tell it to Jesus Alone," every time since when this song is sung my mind goes back to that occasion.

I realize now that I am digressing from my main topic of teaching, but all my activities were also teaching lessons of behavior and personal relations by example as well as precept. I was mindful of this.

Now back to my topic, the sixth school. Miss Lena Edwards, my middle grades assistant, was well along to becoming an "old maid." She was reserved and took no part in community activities. She went home to Enterprise every weekend. This is not to the best interest of themselves or to the community. I had to take one of her pupils, an older boy, out of her room into mine. She could not keep him in her control and asked me to take him. She had one facial feature I should not have noticed and wish I could forget but it "stood out like a sore thumb," a feature of nature she could not change nor was she to be blamed. I should not now mention it and won't name this unusual feature. But she was a good and successful teacher. I have not met up with them since leaving that county. My other teacher, Miss Bessie Collins also had a facial feature not common. She had lost the sight of one eye, but this did not detract so much from her appearance, she had an attractive appearance. Nor did this diminish her vision, she could read music and perform well on the organ in school and at the Baptist Church where I sometimes, out of obligation to the community, attended their services. All knew I was a Christian and a member of the Church of Christ. This was one thing I always kept apparent everywhere I taught.

Here again I made my yearly visits for the holiday's vacation back home to my mother and father, also yearly to Baldwin County. This was the year that I made a trip Christmas time to see my deaf brother in the school for the deaf at Talledega.

I must tell about this trip here. I went by train, arrived there about 9 p.m. There was snow but no taxi (uncommon then) but there was a man at the station with a one horse "dray," just a flat on four wheels-no sides. I asked him to take me and my suit case out to the school there. There was no seat for its general use was to deliver freight. He sat on a small box, lines in hand. I stood behind him holding on to his shoulders with both hands. He urged his horse into a trot and away on a ride through the snow (my first snow ride). I completely surprised my deaf brother, Gillis. When I entered the recreation hall there was a dance going and he was in it. I touched his shoulder, not for a dance with him, for this was foreign doings to me. He may as well been looking for the president of the United States as for me. This ended his participation and we spent the night together. I took him home to papa and mamma on a round trip R.R. ticket to surprise them likewise and stay with them while I made my third yearly trip to Baldwin County and an attraction there. On leaving, Jack accompanied me as far as Montgy. Apparently the whole family was in love with me and I with them as well now that we were more intimately acquainted. Oh! How I longed for all this going and coming back to end. Not that I disliked teaching, but this seeming endless moving for my work from place to place. Like preachers, but with me almost a yearly affair, leaving

new found friends to make more, also to leave, and the making over and over of new ones.

But this year was successful and I had plans for a summer vacation. Also for a trip this summer to make the exploratory trip down Sepulga River for Curator Smith and the State Museum of Natural History, at the University and Smith Hall. I will relate here this trip and a new find. My brother, Gillis, also my cousin, Alcus Mancill, younger than either of us, were to accompany me. It was a camping trip and we had first to build a flat bottom boat of rough lumber, pitch it inside and out also between the joints of the bottom boards. We used raw turpentine gum and cotton calking, this made it water tight, a successful job. It was to be a one way trip down stream and with no hurry. Stoping on every shoal. Exploring a short distance up every tributary where we thought to find the fresh water muscles. We made the trip from what is now highway 84 in Conecuh County to Brewton on Conecuh River in Escambia County. We carried some cooked provisions and cooked one turtle and some hen eggs from home, also some catfish we caught on "set hooks" as night. We tried the soft shell turtle eggs but no success here. We were never short of food. The weather was favorable, it was summer time, ideal for camping out. We slept on bed rolls on the ground, had mosquito bars hung from tree limbs, owls for chickens to hoot the hours by. We encountered no bears or varments. We chose a place at springs for our camping sights. We waded and grabbed for muscles on the bottom in shallow water, had instructions to scald, take out the animal in them, tie the valves together with thread. We also had wood alcohol for preserving periwinkles (uni-valve creatures). We picked up some small snakes, turtles, lizards, wasps etc. These we kept in jars with alcohol.

At the end we abandoned the boat in Conecuh River, made up our packs of camp utensils, bedding, boxes of our finds and trampled out of the river swamp, through at Brewton where the river runs between the town proper and East Brewton, so we did not have far to go from the river to the railroad station. The three of us with all these camping packs must have made a spectacle at the station and on Number One L & N passenger train, for only a short distance from Brewton to Evergreen. We sent some of it as baggage.

The results of this exploration was three tired but happy country sons, from an enjoyable trip of freedom from want and fear and free from the confines of house and family life so monotonous.

But Curator Smith was overjoyed when he wrote me that I had sent to the museum one uncatalogued and new specie of fresh water bi-valve, and that he had given it the family name and the species new name "Mancillus." I have never reaped any popularity but it may be notable that my name is on record at the Alabama State Museum of Natural History at the University.

This was my last summer as a member of my fathers household. I was to be twenty four years of age. Before another birthday I was to "leave my father and mother," but I was not engaged to be married and had given but little thought, had no plans, nor had I mentioned nothing of this leap of faith at that time.

I had my contract signed for another year in the same school for the term of seven months at the same salary. Mr. Byrd, besides being Supt. of Education was also an agent for Prudential Life of Philadelphia.

He had written me up for a 20 year endowment policy for $1000.00.

In 1913-14 I was back to begin the second term in September and had the same assistant teachers. Every day of all my schools had, from the first, begun by reading a chapter from the bible, some school song in Chapel, which was my room,

and with prayer which was offered by me in the name of Christ. I had the same boarding home and walk to school. The cost for board was a sacrifice for the school and for the low salaried teachers. I must have eaten much more food, which alone was worth more than I was asked to pay for, not to mention laundry, wood burned in the fireplace and many more conveniences including, wash bowl and pitcher and wash stand and the privilege of the use of a tin wash tub to bathe sitting in on the floor. This was what I was accustomed to, for I was not then spoiled by luxuries. I could not complain at the price of six dollars per month. My good room to myself and a fine comfortable bed, either of which were worth more than the price. So I count either the food or the comfort was well worth the money. One or the other was free. Looking back I could have saved more than half my salary but like most young people I just did not.

Time slipped by fast until Christmas vacation, though I had looked forward to it with hope to make one more trip to Baldwin County which was ever beckoning. I surely lost no interest. This was still being stimulated by regular letters one or two weeks apart. Postage was cheaper than rail fare. So come the holidays, only one week long and I was on my way. My sweetheart had dropped out of college, Freed Hardeman. She had not returned that fall. She was now twenty and had other interest. This was disappointing to me but school had become tiresome to her. I had held off making any proposal that would interrupt her college career. But my reluctance must have made her the more anxious to learn what my intentions were, so this time she purposed to know. I know she thought of me as indifferent or lightly concerned, so not waiting for me to "break the ice" as we sat together in her "parlor" she, with a throbbing chest and an earnest voice proposed to me a question I must answer now. Her words were, "I want to know what are you coming here to see me for?" Then I said, "If you, my darling and my only love, wish to be married I will be happy to enter into an engagement now." I had no doubt before she said, "I do," that this was an agreeable happy decision for both of us.

I had now to obtain the concent of her father and mother. This was a trial every young hopeful has to face. But they had a good idea of what might be coming up. So her father took me to his barn, horse and mule stables and pen where he had some fine porkers fattening for me to admire. Surely he must have known I was not much interested in stock, not being a stockman but only a school teacher, so it must have been just to get me to relax and get to the subject he suspicioned I had in mind, to wit, an interest deep seeded concerning his oldest daughter. His thirteen living children were all at home for Christmas, two brothers from College at Henderson Tenn. Though one brother, then twenty three, had not married. So hers would be his first to marry. The word comes more easily with me now than it did then. It seemed it would choke me to speak it. I waited until we were back through his front yard gate and on the walk to the door steps when I thought, "now or never." Then it had to come out almost to the steps and I began; "Mr. Wilson, Lee and I have decided we want to be married and I am asking your concent." On the steps he said "we will have to ask Annie too." There I was with it all to do over again, but now it was some easier. We walked into his bedroom and he called his wife in from her room, sat down, then I poured our my heart to them both, saying, "Lee and I have known and loved and waited each for the other since we first met at Highland Home College. She was sixteen then and I was twenty, now we are both of age and want to be husband and wife but want it to be pleasing to both of you." They said we both together gladly and willingly give our full and unreserved concent. They then told me that I was the only young man, a Christian and a

gentleman, that we have wanted Lee to give her attention to.

Back with Lee in the parlor, we talked together frankly. I reminded her of the good parents and home she was leaving, that I might not ever have the comforts and things equal to what she was leaving. But we will have each other and unbroken love for each other for life. She said, "this is all I ask or want," and so I left her to set the date, and that it be after my present school was out the first of May 1914. She wrote me the date later and I sent her a plain gold wedding band, and left Blackshear for Enterprise to finish my last year there.

Come April One and "Fools Day," I learned all my boy students had planned to play "hookie." The evening before I talked to them before I dismissed them, told them I had been informed of their intentions. I reasoned with them that it would be a foolish act on their part and that the laws of the State required that I hold school every day, not counting legal holidays. That I was being paid for my time by the State out of their fathers tax money. I warned them of my duty to punish all students who play "hookie" and assured them I would do just that, so now I said I am telling you before you do this that I will come back the day after tomorrow determined and prepared to whip lash everyone of you who do this.

I dismissed them and sure enough every one except one of the youngest of them stayed out of school. Come the day after, I opened school as usual, with reading, a song and a prayer for us all to perform our duties in a way pleasing to God. This done I simply said, "all who were absent from school rise from your seats, come up in front of the rostrum and form a line from wall to wall." That done, I walked down and told the first boy on the right to step forward two steps. I applied the switch (I had a sufficient supply) and counted the lashes, one, two, three, four, five, then "you may go to your seat." "The next step forward." Continuing the procedure orderly, showing no partiality, no emotion, to the least or the largest. One was a young man heavier and taller than I, it was the same, "step forward next." Then with this finished and all seated, I called up my first class for that morning. I made no comments, none were needed. Only the youngest was excused. They all took their punishment in the presence of all the girls and one another.

This ended my trouble for a spell so far as discipline was the question. But before the term closed I had one or two more infractions of orderly conduct. One boy about 16, and a real tough guy, tried me again. He got permission to go to the pump in the yard for a drink of water, which was a usual procedure, but was not allowed without permission. When he came back to his seat his desk mate got up and went out also. When this one came back in I asked him who told him he could go for water? He called the first boys name and said he told me you said I could go. I then asked him if he had told him this and he said he did tell him that. So, I said you told him a falsehood and for this, not for either of you to go for water. So come forward before the whole school and take your punishment for lying. This irritated me and I felt he needed a good one. I layed the lash on good and strong. He kept stepping toward me and I kept him pushed back at arms length. He was strong and tough and could have given me trouble. All at once he reached into his pocket, I suspected for a knife, I was wrong, he came out with a box of strike, everywhere matches ablaze and smoking. He quietly said, "Mr. Mancill you almost bought yourself a pair of breeches." I quit at that, it was a good point for ending. I said, "I thank you for getting the matches out in time to save me that expense, now you may go to your seat." None laughed at what happened, it was too serious to be funny. I resumed my class and the work for the day as usual.

One other disciplinary problem arose before this second year closed, from a younger brother of the boy who caused trouble for the teacher who preceeded me there. When time came to punish him he said he would not submit to punishment. I then dismissed all the pupils, keeping two older boys in the room for witnesses of what might happen. I had been told he was carrying a concealed pistol.

I then told him since he refused to submit to punishment I had no choice but to expell him from school. He was reluctant to leave the room. I told him to "get up and go" to the door. When he rose from his seat something dropped to the floor with a loud sound and he stooped quickly to pick it up . I suspected it to be the weapon I heard he was carrying, not for me but for another man he regarded as dangerous to himself. I had not regarded myself as his enemy, tho perhaps not as an esteemed friend.

Then he went to the front door and hesitated again, maybe thinking on whether to go or to stay and submit to his punishment. Then I said to him, "Guy (his first name) don't cause me to have to go to a 'phone and summon a policeman from Enterprise to come and take you home." At this he opened the door and walked out. I then rang my hand bell for the students to come back in, and proceeded with my normal duties.

That noon hour of that day, one of my boys came in while I was eating my lunch at my desk and told me that Guy had come back to the school grounds and asked him to "go in and tell Mister Mancill that I am back to take my punishment and be reinstated in school." I said you tell him "please, will you wait until I finish my lunch and then I shall call for him to come in." This I did, he came in, whereupon I gave him an appropriate talk, telling him I thought he had "made a really good and wise decision, I gladly welcome you back and will only require that you be a well behaved student and refrain from any act that you think might require any correction or punishment." He submitted, took the twenty-counted lashes, stoically, returned to play out the time of noon intermission, came in even with a smile, which I returned, resumed his normal role, was a dutiful student to the close of my school.

The closing weeks of this last school, I was to finish while a single and lonely man dragged out like a "lame duck." Then I learned what this term meant when applied to the Congress of the United States of America. Mine was worse than a Congress, if any thing could be worse than a "lame duck" Congress. I counted, from then, forward, counting down each cold lunch each day at noon, eating alone twenty (24 hours), nineteen (24 hours), eighteen (24 hours),finally to two, then "one" joyfully O! Closed the door but as mixture of sadness retrospectively, but joy! joy! JOY!! Contemplatingly.

I cant remember that I have met up with or even heard from one of these well remembered young (then) people since that last day of that second year with them. I had loved them all and not one of them could but have loved me. Tears well up now as I write these lines.

Problems? Yes, recurring again and again but hopefully rewards too, over and over. I wonder if only a few people ever give adequate, esteem and regard to dedicated teachers whose patience and efforts have so much contributed to what they each become. Next to parenthood and the preaching of Christ, surely next to these follows the teaching profession. "Tribute to whom tribute honor to whom honor, reward to whom honor and glory to whom glory." How about $100.00 dollars per month, $5 per day? Less than the State of Alabama received for the annual lease (as was then done) of a convict. The only difference was that the convicts then wore the stripes, and similarly the children also wore the stripes of switches.

Oh! Yes another difference, the convicts got the belts and the State got the money, while the children got the belt and the teachers got (rich) the money.

Come the close of this school, I had saved up in the four years in school work, exactly $400.00 in cold cash. Enough to pay the preacher $25.00, a R.R. fare round trip from Ozark, Alabama to Perdido, Alabama and go on a "honeymoon to Mamouth Cave Ky. Also buy two taylored suits, one black broadcloth and one gray woursted at $65.00 each. Railroad fare, hotel and meals - first night at Gay Teage Hotel in Montgomery, then Built-More, Nashville, two nights-then to Mammouth Cave in Ky. Round trip R.R. fare Perdido to Mammouth Ky and return to Evergreen. $5.00 to a buddy to meet us with a Model T Ford for the thirteen miles out to my fathers farm and a big welcome home dinner, with family and friends, all old timers at Herbert post office Conecuh County Alabama.

I don't have to relate but will, a final grim reality, flat broke! I kept mum about this direful situation especially to my bride.

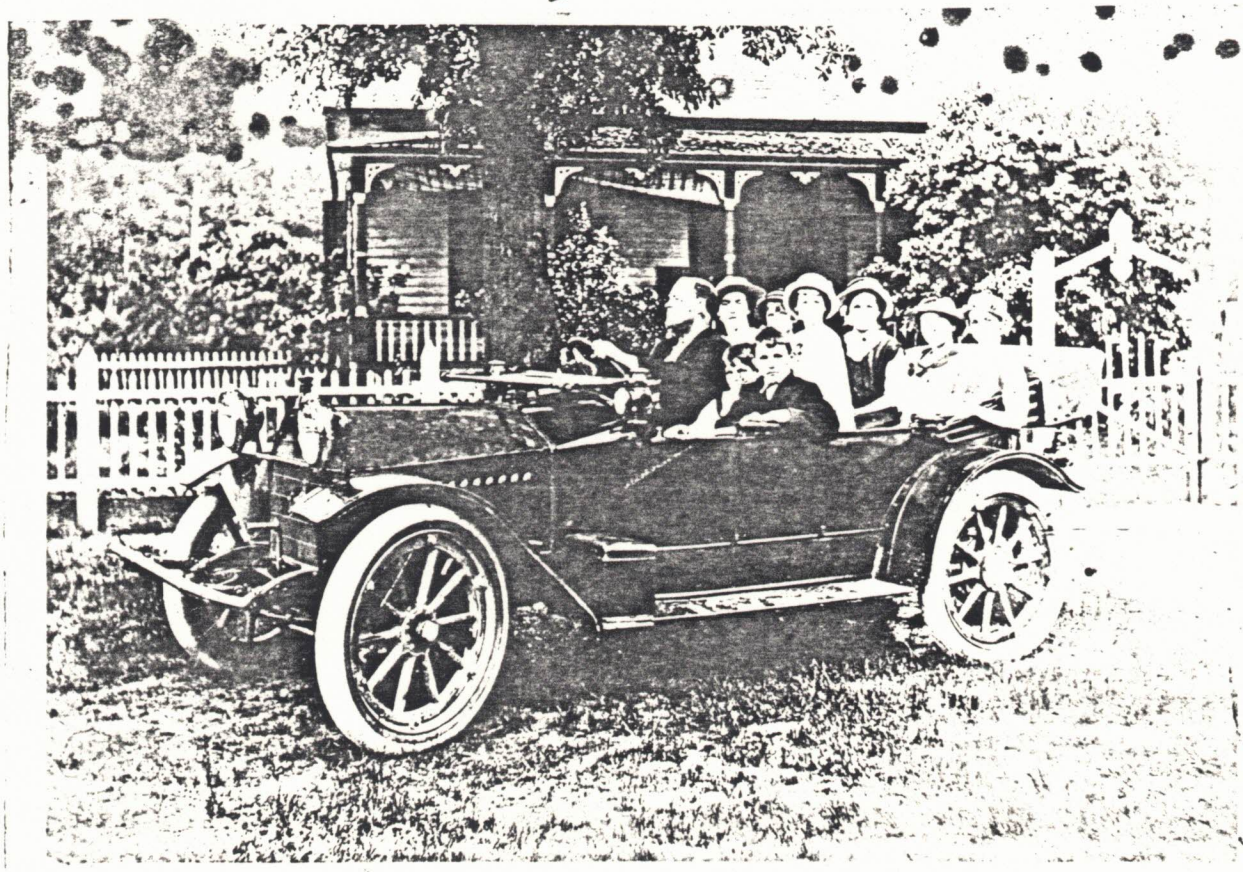
It was a consolation to know she had a big trunk, a folding suitcase both stuffed with fine cloths, from without to within, else she too would have been in real trouble. I hardly think now I could have scraped the bottom and not found enough for shoe or bonnet, to say nothing of the in-betweens. I chuckle to myself as I now write this sitting alone widowed, but then it was nothing at all to laugh about, things were, to me, really serious. I had to help my mother do her washing and OURS, drawing the well water, fire the wash pot, punch down the clothes, take them up scalding hot. Fortunately none of H.E.R.S. needed battling or even the scrub board. I handled them carefully unaccustomed to such fabrics. Mother said nothing, I too was silent, however, we both doing some thinking. All the while I fortunately spared HER from this embarrassing ordeal by sending her home with my cousin, Addie Mancill, for an overnight and one day stay, out first night for ten days to be separated. Our first one to be separated, but many, too many, more were to come. This and many strange things were to come, all unfamiliar then both to her and to me.

Fortunately, I contacted our County Supt. of Education and he offered me a two months school in another rural community for that critical summer. I gladly accepted it at $40.00 per month. Even though OUR board would be $10.00 each per month, the other benefits, being together, would well compensate for the cost of board.

Like the okra at my first boarding place at Mr. Coy Millers, when we arrived at Mr. & Mrs. McKenness home and got settled for that first summer together, after four long years since we first saw each other at Higland Home, we found here that the surplus for our fare was chicken, a yard full of White Leghorn Friers. Everyday there was a neck wringing experience for my new wife a chicken-neck-wringing. She could really twist the heads off, and scald and pick them too and help fry them so they were on the table when I got home, not whole of course but two whole chickens all cut up and fried and with them hot biscuits and brown gravy, vegetables too, fresh from the garden. We had long walks together down the shady lanes and sometimes necking too. You might say this also was chicken to us too.

These two months slipped by, void of lonliness. She missed being away from her good home and family and wrote and persuaded her parents to visit us one time that summer. Mister Wilson owned a new Cadillac, one of their early models, steering wheel on the right side, gas head lights and a folding back top. It was a beauty to admire. Of course they had to stay overnight at a "sort of" hotel in Repton, Alabama. It was a joy to all of us but especially to Cora Lee, now Mrs. Mancill.

Annie Missouri (Flowers) Wilson 1910 John Travis Wilson



Cadillac
driven by
John T. Wilson
and
their younger
children —
Five are not
in picture —
some are away
at college.

MY SIXTH SCHOOL, CONECUH COUNTY, AGAIN MY HOME COUNTY
SUMMER 1914

Ossifield, name of the school district but it was then known as the Langham School House, another board up and down with battens over the cracks, board floor, unceiled walls, home made doors but glass window sash.

Here, too, I had one assistant teacher, but only one room for both. I took the front, gave him the back for his recitation area.

This building had only one large room, no partition of lumber or curtain. We had to agree to subdue our voices so as not to interfere with confusion. He was the son of Mr. Langham, one of the school trustees, unmarried. I can call attention to this latter fact since I was then a married man. I took little stock in parties at night but he did. He must have lost a lot of sleep and he often dropped off to sleep while (not) hearing his reading pupils read audible. Maybe I should have told this to his trustee father, but did not. I just walked back to his department, touched him and said, "are you "hearing" their reading lesson?" I did not even think it wise to reprimand him in the presence of his pupils. He was my only problem in my school there. I didn't let it bother me, maybe I was negligent of my duty as principal. I accept now, too late, the blame for negligence. Surely he was not a dedicated teacher then. Years later my son "Bill" worked for Mr. Langham when he operated a Venetian blind business in Mobile. He still had faults detrimental to his business.

I must relate a few interesting events I experienced this first summer.

We lived with Mr. & Mrs. Edgar McInnis. His house was of early 19th century construction. The original building was of logs, hewn square four sides and fitted together with notched ends and pinned with wooden drift pins. Later, these were covered over with planed boards, outside walls also on the front porch and hallway. I tell of this to be able to tell how to explain as I concluded, what caused a noise my wife and I heard one night soon after we retired. Soon after turning out our lamp light and lying down we were startled by a really loud noise, as if some one had struck a hard blow across the high headboard of our bedstead. I jumped out of bed, lit the lamp light and looked all around and under our bed, on the floor, between the bedhead and the wall, even outside our window, on the porch, also in the hallway. I could find nothing. No sign of anything anywhere that might have made the dreadful and loud noise. We both tried to describe what it sounded like. We even wondered if someone was around who could have done that. All the others were in their rooms. So there appeared to be no explanation for this noise. I could only conjecture that it could have been the boards of the headboard or of a board on the wall of the log house caused by the house settling as I had been told houses were sometimes known to do. It has been an unsolved mystery to me for all these years since. I was not excited or as some might say, scared by it. We laid down again in the darkness and slept as usual.

The other actual factual event was also of intense interest to me, when, while living with them that summer related an unusual incident in detail to me. First he told about visits of a panther about in their neighborhood where they lived, about a mile from Burnt Corn Creek, which the road from Bellville to Repton crossed. There were two, or as was commonly called the double bridges over this creek. The panther had been seen on several occasions and had been known to visit some farm yards and carry off a few chickens and also some turkeys. This was common talk in the neighborhood. Some had reported that this panther had on occasions killed a small calf and even caused horses to neigh and stampeded in their stalls at night.

All this to understand the setting and the background for a very unusual event I am leading up to as Mr. McInnis related it all to me.

"On a morning early and before daylight a negro man shoved my bedroom door open," he said, "and burst into the room sprawled out on my bedroom floor," and almost breathless, exclaimed, "Mister I am torn all down my back and bleeding to death." I got up, lighted my kerosene lamp and looked him over. There was no blood or torn clothing, no sign of injury. I said, "You must be just badly frightened and very scared." "No sire, what I say is true. That panther we been hearing so much about crossed them two bridges back there at Burnt Corn Creek. I heard him crossing the first bridge just as I had got across, he plunged on my back and I could feel his claws come all the way down my back when I jumped away and ran. He ran after me and I heard his feet and toe nails clicking on the second bridge floor when I crossed it, oh! I was doing my best to out run him, but all the way here I could hear him breathing heavy right behind and near me. I tell you I didn't mean for that panther to get another whack at me."

His telling this about exhausted all his breath. Mr. McInnis said we will look out and see if he has gone away. Then "Please don't, just shut your door and give him more time to go away! I just cleared your gate jumping over it, he must have stopped there, you look, I'm afraid to." "I did, taking the lamp with me all the way to my front yard gate and there was the negro's dog wagging his tail." He came out and he saw it was true and said. "I don't know how come dat, cause I left him tied at home to keep him from following to where I was going to work today. Dat dog sure must 'ave pulled his head out'n dat chain, tracked me all de way from Belleville where I left him tied, ifn dat don't beet de devil, dat dog sho must a wanted to go wid me bad."

Some time while I was at Ossifield that summer my brother Ernest, who was Station Telegraph Operator at McKenzie, wrote me that he had spoken to them, telling them of my success at teaching and that the trustees there had told them that they would get me a contract to teach as principal in the three teacher school the term of 1914-15. So I wrote them to mail me a contract and I would sign it for $100.00 per month. They did and I had only to pack up our belongings, (books and clothes, this was all we owned) and move in with my brother and his wife Wille and three small children to board with them. He had worked there as station agent and telegraph operator since I had been teaching school.

I was to pay him $10.00 per month for each of us, up to Christmas when we rented a house from Ernest's father-in-law, Mr. Hill, a veteran of the Confederacy.

Our school house there was one main building, wood frame construction, one large room used for my classes also as an auditorium. Joined to it in the rear another wood frame building, two story for the other two class rooms. This was the last year these buildings were used for school purposes. I had, Miss Estell Sellars age then 18, one of my only two graduate students to write to them on the subject, "Why McKenzie needs a new building to accommodate a High School combined with your "Grammar," or Grade School." Then that summer and fall it was built and is in use now in 1977.

My two assistants were Miss Nell Dixon, a second or third cousin to me, and Miss ----------, who lived in the community. They were both excellent, well qualified and experienced teachers. I had no disciplinary problems here in any of the rooms. The school house was near enough for me to walk home for lunch both to his house and to the one we rented. In this small frame dwelling we began our first housekeeping that spring of 1915. January first. Our first school in a town.

This necessitated some furniture and kitchen items. I purchased from a local merchant a four cap cast iron wood burning cook stove with oven, together with such kitchen utensils as were necessary, dinnerware etc. Lee must have written her parents of our plans to begin housekeeping. Mr. Wilson, her father, made a trip to Mobile and at L. Hammel ordered and had shipped to McKenzie a round solid oak dining table (Gerald now owns and has refinished this item) chairs to match (our 8 little ones made long use and final disposition of all these), a full bed room suit, springs, two mattresses, beautiful bed spread, sheets, pillows, dresser, wash stand, chest of drawers, all solid oak, a crockery ware wash bowl and water pitcher to match. Now for the first time we could wash our hands and faces in our own bedroom. He sent us an "art square," 10 X 12 good quality rug, for our living room, a center table settee with chairs to match, a rocker, and you name the rest. We were really luxuriously set up for housekeeping and above all ,to my happy gratitude, he did not send me the bill. What a relief! What outpouring of thanks went to them by letter immediately. As you might guess, 9 months later come our first baby. In November of 1915, while teaching at Belleville, we were blessed with a first birth which was a tragedy still born fully developed boy. We had to give this one to God (I write this now in sorrow and with joy, sorrow for our loss but joy to know that we have one treasure, a crown for eternity, God be thanked.) Bless His Holy Name!

Other events I well remember during our stay there, some of which have already been told earlier in these memories.

At the close of this first school of mine we moved to my father and mother's dear old farm home and place of my birth twenty-six years earlier. Details of this will be recorded in another section.

THERE WERE TWO AND ONE HALF MORE SCHOOL TEACHING YEARS YET TO COME AND GO 1915-16, 1916-17 FROM SEPT. TO DEC. 1917

My sixth, seventh and one half years to teach were back in my home county where I had began this career (if such it was) of devoting these early years of my life to the education of some of our Alabama boys and girls. If you like to think of it as I do you may call it Elliott Mancill's sacrifice to the cause of post-Civil War education in Alabama's struggle to set up again an educational system of child education, which had been destroyed by that terrible and senseless War. I am happy now to know that my wonderful grand children have had better educational advantages than I had, even though I had and labored thru advantages my own ancestors were denied. Let us give God the glory and praise.

This school was at Belleville in Conecuh County. One of the earliest settlements in that county during the advance of occupation and improvement of government land use. If you will call it improvement, when it meant the devastation of the rich pine forests of virgin pine timber unsurpassed anywhere away from the Gulf Coast. In this area alone it stood "The Forest Primeval."

Here they had, before I came, a succession of women teachers, discipline had deteriorated, the trustees told me. Many of the older boys had dropped out of school on account of this laxity because they could not learn in such confusion. The whole community was overjoyed to have, now, a man for principal to restore order over chaos, and all the parents joined in the hopes and prospect for an

improvement. In view of the probablity of remaining several years in this community I found and bought a house with thirty acres of open farm land near the village. They had a doctor located here, two churches and this good school building, an improvement over most I had before, even beter than in the town of McKenzie in the adjoining county. It was set back from the main highway (then unpaved) with the largest ("campus") play ground of anywhere I had taught.

I began in good spirits and great plans to make this the best school of my career.

I admitted all the fine young men, from 17 to over 21. I told the trustees I would welcome any over 21 who wished to come. I am happy to name this group of young people who came the first morning. They were Melvin Brantley, Essie Brantley, Jesse Arant, Irvin Hamilton, Ray Hamilton, Jack Hamilton, Norwood Peavey, Nellie Peavey, Claud Peavey, Lonnie Bradley, Ethel Bradley, Proctor Bradley, Carl Smith who was killed in action in France, Mamie Smith, Oliver Crumb, Ruth Crumb, Frank Skinner, and Hugh Barlow. These only do I remember in name. And some of these served in World War I. I had only one assistant so I had four grades, 6-9. My assistant was Miss Estell Lide, a grandaugher of long time Dr. Skinner, DDS and niece to his son, Dr. Percey Skinner, M.D. and his brother Donald Skinner, a member of the County Board of Education, grandfather of Doctor Skinner, M.D., who now practices medicine in Mobile.

All the school turned out in mass and attended the county fair in Evergreen. They paraded in double lines through the streets, with a banner for each school. This was quite a spectacle with most all the pupils from all schools in the county. There must have been more than a thousand. Each school had cheerleaders and cheered down the line in turn, one after the other, raising a continuous, loud and lusty lungs exercise. We had no moving picture cameras then, but some still pictures were taken. I don't remember seeing any of them but doubtless there were some in the county paper, the Evergreen Courant.

At this county fair I won a prize for an exhibit (we had an exhibit for each school). Our school did not win a prize but mine was a personal prize for a pound of real cream butter, molded and shaped to resemble a pine cone. I used a screw threaded bolt to shape the layers of the cone. I got a blue ribbon from the judges for the display and on the taste and texture of the butter. By the way, I did the milking, the churning and the butter making. We had a dug well where we kept the milk cool in the summer time by lowering the covered can down into the good cold water. When spring came I had to plow and prepare the land for the crops. I farmed the 20 acres on the house side of the road, and rented to Mr. Bradley the fifteen acres across the road for half the corn and one fourth the cotton. This was the rule for what's called "share cropping." The tenant farmer paid for the same percent of the fertilizer.

You may wonder how I could possibly teach five days a week. The farming was recreation for me. I was young and able bodied then.

I rose early mornings, had breakfast before daylight, and began my plowing at daylight, came out of the field at seven thirty and was at my school by eight o'clock. In the afternoons, home again from school and behind my plow again until dark. Saturday I had a full day on my farm. I milked our one cow before breakfast and after dark, so milking was twice a night instead of twice a day. I did the churning before bed time. When one must, he can.

During this period all the schools in Alabama were encouraged to engage in Temperance Education. We had classes and drama. Public programs, plays recitations on the evils of intemperance to which the community at large were

encouraged and invited. This movement in the schools helped in passing the 18th amendment to the U.S. Constitution called The Prohibition Amendment. Summer vacation found me busy on my farm and in July of 1916 I lost most all my crop of cotton and peanuts to the hurricane.

My next school session began in September of 1916 and in the spring of 1917 the planting of my second year of farm crops. Also that spring I got fruit crop minded and set out fifty Elberta peach trees bought from a nursery.

Also in April of this spring I took my last state teachers examination. I had to purchase two books upon which I would be examined. These were assigned by the State Department of Education. The first was A History of Education from the times of Socrates in Greece and of Confucius in China and covered periods in Asia, Europe and America, down to Charles Mann of Massachusetts. The other was a book on Heating and Lighting in the General Schools. Also included on this examination was a paper from memory covering an account of my teaching in the public schools in Alabama over a period of five years. These were the subjects required on my state examination for a Life Teachers Certificate after teaching this five years under a First Grade Teachers Certificate. I had to read and prepare on my own. My only assistance came from Mrs. Mancill, my wife. I handed her the book after reading it chapter by chapter and had her follow me in the book while I gave a synopsis from memory of what I had read. She helped by prompting me from the book when I hesitated, thus she was my teacher while I recited. Together we finished the two books mostly during evenings after school and nights after supper, sometimes to 10 o'clock. All this time she was expecting a second child that was born on July 9th, 1917, a boy again, to our joy and we named him for his grandfather John and his father Elliott. Similarly ones born into the spiritual family (Church of Christ) are called (not named) Christians. We did not have to name him Mancill, he was born one. See Acts 26:11.

I took the above state examination in Evergreen at the county court house under Supt. of Education, Mr. R.E.L. Key, who had been elected over me in the year 1912. His four year term expired in 1916.

He was very considerate of me and allowed me all the time I wanted on each paper. It was late in the evening, perhaps sundown, when I finished and I was the last applicant to leave. He walked with crutches, one leg had been amputated at the knee. He walked to his home in Evergreen after night fall, and told me later of loosing my papers on his way home, missing them when he arrived home, he turned back and found them. I did not ask him why he was taking them home when they should have been left in his files at the court house nor did he tell me a reason for doing so. I now conjecture that he was perhaps wanting to read them. He, at least, thus manifested an interest in the contents, whether for his own interest in my teaching experience, or for his own edification, I will never know. All I now know is that he defeated me in the election and that I have defeated him in life span, (I heard even while we were in the run-off election race, that he gambled with his own school boys in dice games). This I feared was gossip so I paid no attention to such derogatory reports. I was running on my merits not on his demerits. One good lesson I learned in this my only political try was that lies are hatched, some I learned of against me, unheard and unthought of. I have ever since been glad I was defeated. Like the fox and the sour grapes, I didn't want the job in the first place and was "running" half heartedly. When the vote count gave him only 24 over me I did not even think of contesting the election. This was not my career, teaching was and I liked it until I became too greatly disturbed by

having to register in August of 1917 for World War I. In the same month I fell with over-exhaustion or with sunstroke when hoeing sweet potatoes up to 12 noon, while my wife was yet in bed with our baby boy. Had not my brother, Gillis, been with me at the time I fell unconscious, I would have been unable to get to the house for some time. He had started on ahead of me but had fortunately turned and looked back and returned to help me up and to the house.

After these two years of teaching and farming, to supplement my meager salary of $100.00 per month, I was ripe myself to give up one for the other and in the faces of desperation my school patrons and the trustees met and decided they could not supplement my salary again for another year. They to had suffered heavy losses from the nineteen sixteen hurricane. So then all I would receive was the state allowance for first grade teachers which was $75.00 per month. Then too I had received my Life a still higher grade.

When I began the next term in September I got an offer to buy my home and farm. Still facing the probability of having to leave my wife and baby with the farm to be inducted into the Army it was easy and I felt a wise thing to sell it and give up teaching, move her to Baldwin County, build a house there near her mother and family. So I sold the place for $1600.00 cash. I had paid $1200.00 for it and still owed $500.00 mortgage on it.

I taught the school to the December holidays, resigned the school and moved by wagon teems fifty eight miles to Blackshear. I was offered a school in the local district there, I declined. I planned to farm some of Mrs. Wilson's land, built a house in the summer. This was my last year in the teaching profession.

FARMING IN ALABAMA 1918 - 1941
CARPENTER 1941 - 1971

Our move from Belleville, Conecuh County, Alabama to Blackshear in Baldwin County, Alabama.

Our first and second moves, first from McKenzie, Butler County, fifteen miles by wagon to my father's farm tenant house, where we lived through the summer of nineteen fifteen. Here I helped my father some with his farm work which was always light in the summer after "laying by" time. I was in time to plant for ourselves a fine garden of summer vegetables, beans, peas, greens, tomatoes, squash, etc.

We had no screens on the windows and doors so the flies came in freely and stayed over night. Our neighbors cat paid us a visit every night after we put out the lamp light. We couldn't close the doors at night in the hot summer nights so we had to endure our pests all summer.

My school in Belleville, twenty miles away was to begin in the month of September. I made a trip there in May, found a house and thirty acre farm near the village and school house. I bought it for $1200.00, borrowed $500.00 from the Peoples Bank of Mobile, on an open promissory note. My father-in-law, John T. Wilson, did business with them. He signed the note with me but he died of an erupted appendix before the note was paid. I paid the note after his death.

We moved into this house in September before my school year opened. From my $100 a month salary I paid $25 plus the interest to Mr. Hines, from whom I bought the farm.

At the end of my teaching at Belleville in December of 1917, I sold the farm and home for $1600 cash, paid off the balance of the note and the balance of the $500 note at the bank.

We made then, that December vacation and in January of 1918, our fourth move to Blacksheare Baldwin County, Alabama.

I had registered for World War One in August of 1917 after our second boy John Elliott was born in July of 1917. We had lost our first baby at birth in November of 1915. Our second son gave me classification -B, and I was deferred until 1918 and the Armistice of November 11th that year. In this way I was happily not inducted into the armed forces. My grandfather died the year 1859 before the Civil War. My father was only six years old at its beginning and now I had not been old enough, only ten at the war with Mexico, 1898, and had missed now world War One.

I should here relate that my first crop was lost in the hurricane of July, 1916, but I had some corn in the ear also some cattle to move and more household furniture. It required two double mule teams with two wagons beside my own one-mule wagon. I hired Mr. Rufus Burt and Mr. Alvin Riggs with their teams and wagons.

We loaded and left early one morning just after Christmas, all three wagons along together for the 58 mile trip. I was last with one milk cow being led behind my wagon. I had hired a black neighbor man to go with me and had a cooked ham in the wagon. I was driving and he was walking. When we got a half mile from the house, he dropped the rope he led the cow with, ran up to the wagon and grabbed my sack of food with the ham in it and ran back toward his home. I was helpless, could not leave the wagon, mule and cow, so I had to tie the cow behind the wagon and go on, the others were ahead and out of sight.

We made it to Uriah in Monroe County by night, about thirty miles on the trip. We took out our mules, watered and fed them in a grove by a hotel there and got rooms and meals for overnight. The next day we reached my wife's mother's home before night. Lee had gone by train with our baby the day before we left Belleville. My drivers spent the night, unloaded our furniture into a tenant house built nearby for Mr. Wilson's turpentine hands. They left for the trip back to Belleville. I don't remember what I paid them for their services but probably $25.00 each for four days with their teams. I also paid the hotel bill which was about $1.50 for each of us three.

The house we moved into here was of rough wide boarded up and down for the walls and had only homemade doors and shutters for the door and two windows. I had also a "stick and dirt" chimney. We had to keep the flames low in the fireplace to keep from setting the wooden chimney sticks afire.

Here, too, we had an abundance of company, no screens to keep the flies or rats out, the wood hogs used the room on the ground under the house for sleeping quarters, where on the cold winter nights they slept together in a pile and when the ones on top got too cold, they slid down and pushed under and between others for a warmer place and kept up a grunting and squeeling chorus most of the nights. I had no yard fence around the house to keep them away nor a dog to chase them away. I had to devise some way to make them vacate the premises. How could I possibly do this and eradicate the fleas they were raising in the dust. I had not discovered "high life" it was not then on the market, but coarse salt was. I got 200 pounds of this commodity and covered the ground under the house. Then I surveyed the "lay of the land" which was upgrade from the house to the road. I took note when it rained that there was a ditch by the road that filled with water so I formulated a plan to open a ditch to drain this water down the slope from the road toward our house. The next big rain furnished the water to soak up and wet the sand and salt under the house. This really worked a miracle, as we sometimes

say--it eradicated the fleas with salt water and wet up the sleeping quarters for the hogs' discomfort. They abandoned this on the first trial.

Next we had another problem, this was with bed bugs, we called them "chinces." The walls were their daytime quarters and our beds were their nightly resort. Blood suckers they were and after getting a fill of human blood they either hid during the day in the bed mattresses or returned to the walls to wait through the daytime and make another foray the next night. They were very careful not to crawl on a persons skin where it was sensitive. They tried to stay on the bedding or clothing reach over for a puncture ever so mosquito-like to steal the blood with the least molestation to the victim. Fortunately, I had learned from my mother a very effective drug that would kill them also their eggs on contact. The very dangerous and deadly form of bichloride of mercury called or named chlorosive sublimate. I got this at a drug store with the poison sign of the cross-bones on the bottle or box. The druggest said an ounce of the powder form could kill a thousand men if it got into their food. This stuff mixed with a teaspoon full to a quart of spirits of turpentine and applied with a brush or with a mop of chicken feathers, to the cracks in the walls and to the frames and slats of the bedsteads would completely eradicate the bed bugs at one application. We did this there and in all the houses into which we later moved and found it very effective. These night time pests were common in our southern climate in the 1800's and early 1900's but seemingly later became quite extinct after people in general learned to fumigate.

Well this left us with only mosquitos for nightly pests and this could be eliminated in unscreened houses, then common, by using mosquito netting over each sleeping bed. We called them mosquito bars. They were stretched over metal frames, hung from the ceiling or overhead joists when there was no overhead ceiling and draped around the bed down to the floor. Thus we overcame these problems with pests, but not the houseflies. But here at Blackshear we also had a problem of eradicating ticks which infested our cattle. I had moved from an infested county that had not been dipping cattle to Baldwin where dipping cattle had begun. I was uninformed about the legal requirements, one of which I had violated by moving my cattle into Baldwin County, such cattle were legally restricted from being allowed to run at large before being dipped. It was wintertime when I moved there and dipping was suspended for the winter months. So I was given a notice by the cattle inspector that I had violated the anti-tick laws on three counts and was subject to a fine of thirty dollars on each count. The notice required that I go to the County Judge of Probate Court and pay off to avoid arrests pronto--I called at his office and before Judge Volst I appeared and pleaded guilty and asked for mercy saying I had not been notified before-hand not to move my cattle into this county. I assured him that I would strictly observe the legal requirements to dip my cattle as soon as dipping was resumed. He knew me and my wife's people, also I had purchased my marriage license from his office, signed by him in May, 1914, so he was as lenient as the law allowed him to be and kindly let me off on only one count--$35.00 plus $2.00 to the inspector, and told me to pay it at my own convenience. I was flat broke from moving also, I had ordered a car load of lumber from Carney Mill Company at Atmore, had paid the bill of over $600.00 out of the sale of my farm at Belleville, and was busy hauling it from where the log railroad had dumped it on the ground in front on the yard of our little church building, to store it in a shed out of the weather.

I don't remember when I paid the fine but know that I did as soon as I could. This is the only fine I have ever had to pay for the violation of a law. I'll tell

about another violation and how I paid it without cash when I relate my living at Summerdale, Alabama.

In the spring of 1918 I renewed my farming with more vigor and determination. My wife's mother, Annie Wilson, granted me the use of 20 acres of cleared farm land free of rental cost for my main crops, corn and cotton. I prepared the land and planted the crops. In addition, I set about to fence and clear more land on the forty acres she proposed to give to us on which I put in more corn and velvet beans for cow feed. There was a small building on it around which I fenced in a mule and cow lot and added some stables to the building, and also put down a bored well for water and curbed it with twelve-inch pine boards, made and installed a windlass, rope and pulley with a well bucket valve in bottom. From this well I had an abundant supply of clear fresh water.

My crops grew apace, I cultivated them with my one small mule named Scott. He was indeed a marvel farm animal and we became great and understanding work partners. I employed a strong man to drive the wooden posts for fencing the five acres of new ground, cleared it of trees but left the stumps in the ground to rot, which required two years or longer. I used for farm tools mainly a Georgia stock and an iron beamed one horse Goober turning plow, a double stock for covering seed in planting.

When my crops were "laid by" we finished, grass and weeds eliminated. My crops were left to finish growth and fruiting to maturity which required the months of July and August. During these two months I cleared off a suitable area for a homesight, set up brick pillars, sills and floor joints for a four-room residence with the traditional open hall and back porch, built in the ell style, two rooms parallel with the main road but back 300 feet from the highway on a picturesque gentle slope and surrounded by a beautiful stand of oak, pine, and gum trees.

I did all this building alone up to the plates for the roof. Not being experienced in cutting and framing a roof, I hired a knowledgeable carpenter to lay this out, cut the rafters for hiproofing, each end and forming a valley on the back for the two rooms of the ell, to be used for the dining room and kitchen. This man was a Mr. Matthews from Latham who lived seven miles away. After the roof was completed, I did all the flooring alone, also the ceiling of the walls and all the overhead. There was a stack brick chimney to be built between the main bedroom and the dining room. I hired a bricklayer for this job, he also built me a flue of brick hung from the ceiling joists for our wood-cookstove. Most of the necessary construction was completed by the end of September and my crops were gathered, the cotton sold and now I was free enough to go to Mobile and work in the shipyard during October where I was employed by Fred T. Leigh and Company out of New York, contractors to build three concrete merchant vessels for the U.S. Government to be used in World War I but were not completed, not even the first one, until after the war ended in November 1918. For this carpentry work, in building forms the shape and size of the vessel, I was paid .80 cents an hour, and had to rent a room and eat out while there. Of course I was only one of a large number of employees, for all required trades, iron workers, plumbers, pipe fitters, electricians, etc., I didn't go home rich by any count but made enough to buy some clothing for the winter.

I put in one more year at this location, 1918-1919, made a second crop, saw hard times after the war, so we decided to sell out our holdings and make another move.

Our first baby boy was sick most of our first summer here. We all but lost him with colitis. Doctors knew little then, no safe way to treat the trouble in

babies. Really, I think my father helped us more to save the baby's life by encouraging us to feed him more. All the doctors we took him to had taken all milk, all food from his feeding and used only barley water strained. This all but brought on death from starvation in the effort to starve the infection in the intestines. Papa encouraged us to give the baby turnip green broth, with a little corn meal boiled with it. This was so more tasty and relished more as well as more nutritious. He began to improve right away and was soon recovered.

THE NEXT PERIOD (1918 - 1940)

For twenty two years I followed the plow and raised a family of two daughters and six sons. I bought an open farm of forty acres after two years of farming and living in our new home at Blackshear.

In October of 1918 I went to Mobile to work at a shipyard at the trade of carpentry. Here I was paid .80 cents an hour and worked at building forms on "ways" for a concrete vessel. The forms were not finished when the Armistice ended the war on November 11th, 1918. That day I witnessed a glaring, to me a heathenish celebration on the streets of Mobile. Being a Christian in heart, not in name only, I could not take part in hate and demonstration of triumph over a fallen enemy so I, with one of my brothers-in-law, Bill Butler, a gospel preacher, withdrew from the spirit of it when I guessed what was to begin. The shipyard workers I saw were forming a double line to march up town, so I said to Willard, "Let us go back on the ship." We told some we met, workers, coming off that we were returning to pick up and put away our tools, to keep down suspicion, we were not intending to join in the march. We waited until the marchers had gone, then took off our badges and "followed afar off." We were careful not to be seen or identified. Not that we were sympathetic toward the enemy; we were as happy as anyone that the war was over, but just avoided mingling in the ungodly celebration. It would take a book to tell what went on in Mobile that day. I will relate only briefly some of the most glaring.

All the business doors were locked with signs posted, "Gone to the Kaiser's Funeral." Effigies hanged from many light posts, old bags stuffed with hay, signed "The Kaiser." One old dairyman's one horse wagon loaded with a drab looking casket labled; "The Kaiser." Worst of all, to me, to see the students from the then, "Mobile Medical College," marching column, the head marchers carrying a real human skeleton attached upright on a pole labeled "The Kaiser." Behind him a single human skull, dangling on the end of a staff, labeled "The Crown Prince." I was ready to quit the scene at this unholy exhibition of hate and heathenism. I had not mingled in the crowds but kept aside and unobserved for fear of being identified. I welled up in fear that I might be taken for an enemy sympathizer and if so might be mobbed by the crowd. We, perhaps the only two, in that vast throng of moving humanity, not taking active part in such pagan demonstration. We slipped out of the crowds and made it to our boarding house room, at the corner of Conception and Church Street, where late into the night the drunken gangs roamed the streets. (We had seen many a man and woman turn up and drink publicly from filled whiskey flasks and even quart bottles, all the garbage cans had empty whiskey bottles, some filled most to the top. Whiskey stores must have sold out all their stock this busy booming day for this commercial commodity.) The continued loud noise lasted all night with yelling, beating metal on metal, firing fire arms into the air some loaded charges, maybe all, for we could hear the falling pellets of shot hit on the roof just above our heads as we lay sleepless in bed in our upstairs room.

We were glad to leave this holocaust the next morning. We returned to the shipyard got our tools, "took up our carriage," retired to the L & N Depot, and departed on the next passenger train for Bay Minette and for home with our wives and babies. Willard had one little boy, I too, one little boy, John Elliott and eleven days later my dear wife, Cora Lee had her twenty fifth birthday and eleven more days, her second, a baby girl Annie Lee. Named for her grandmother Annie Missouri (Wilson) Flowers and her own mother Cora Lee. We were anxious to have our two babies named in honor of their parent and grandparent, so these names came first just in case there should be no more babies down the line to bear these worthy names. We didn't know then that our doubts were unfounded (there was one more girl baby and five more boy babies to need names). Cora Lee should have known for she had been told before she was married. She was told her fortune by her Aunt Sallie (Wilson) Coleman, from her own coffee cup that she would have nine (9). This she disbelieved at that time, and had said then in her young woman and maidenhood that she was not planning to have any children at all. But Aunt Sally was a sure and dependable coffee cup teller, trained by other wise mid-wives how to be sure by the shape of the formation of pattern made by the grounds in the cup. This was when the ground coffee was added to the boiling water, stirred in, and cold water immediately added after the grounds had boiled one minute. This was all done correctly back then before percolators and instant coffee were discovered. Coffee cup fortune telling art, the boon of young single women, it determined their sure and unfailing future expectations. This has become another number of lost art.

But my future was fixed after 1918, when I had launched into the labors, trials, and failures and successes of family and farm life for the ensuing years after 1916, when I began farming on my own. I had not lacked experience in the simple mode of the cotton, corn, peanut, potato, sugar cane, syrup making, gardening, and stock raising after the style of our fathers, one horse Georgia Stock pattern. At least we could and did make a living, if only a surviving one. Family raising goes well with farming. No industrious family will starve or become emancipated when there is abundance of food almost every year fresh from the garden and field. Corn for bread, milk, butter, eggs, meat, vegetables, beans, potatoes, etc. who can fear starving. But above the necessary foods for the body, there is labor unceasing for every member of the family. Recreation, physical exercise, playing, school, church, family love and Godly living. All this builds strong well developed bodies and minds.

Not always successful crops and good stable financial income, but even with some failures, lessons of thrift, management (tho sometimes poor), industry, economy and learning to "make do" with what is at hand. Farm and home, children growing up under these environments learn to have to be workers, not shirkers, self independent and self-reliant, that life is real, earnest and demanding as well as self sacrifice and self denial. Children can't define or recognize these traits of character while learning them by experience. It is enough for them to acquire them without realizing at the time that they are acquiring them. All this points for success in life after they launch out on the wide sea of experience on their own life ventures. He who survives is successful.

December 19, 1918, I saw the arrival of our first girl, Annie Lee, and Mamma's Aunt Sally (Wilson) Coleman who had delivered all of her mother, Annie Wilson's, babies, was the mid-wife for this, our first girl baby. She was just one month old when we were moving from our first and only new home, the only one I ever built from the ground up.

I sold this house to my brother-in-law, Bosso Wilson, my wife's brother, for $1000.00. We made a trip by train to Mobile in late December. I had no plans for where to move to, but providentially, the day we both were in Mobile with our two babies (I remember now nothing of why we went then to Mobile) but there I met and talked to a farmer with whom I got into conversation, and made inquiry about the locality where he lived, at Silverhill in South Baldwin County. I felt an interest in his report about that area, and also learned that he wanted to sell his house and forty acres of farm land, so we decided to cross Mobile Bay on the Boat, Magnolia, with him that same day. He was returning by way of Fairhope, Alabama, so we crossed with him and he took us to his home for overnight. The next morning we looked his place over and we both decided on buying it. His price was $2500.00 and my wife had recently received this very amount as her part of her deceased father's cash savings. Her mother had decided to give each of her thirteen adult decendents an equal share in the cash part of the estate left to her in his will. She still retained her home, some cash, and all his personal property as well as 800 acres of land and the 10 room home they lived in, also the little church building on two acres of property left to her. This church building she later donated to the small congregation of the Church of Christ at Robertsdale. We dismantled the building and moved all the material there and rebuilt it exactly as it had formerly stood in North Baldwin County.

Mr. Anderson and wife deeded us the place he had owned and we began our fourth move to Silverhill early in January, 1920. This was another fifty-eight miles, mainly by mule teams. I did find one man in Bay Minette who owned a model T truck whom I hired for $25.00 to haul one load of our household furniture.

It had been built at the turn of the 20th century. It was the first time we owned a house that was painted outside and plastered inside with a stairway and two floors, small but adequate for our small family of two children. We lived here for nine years and our family increased to seven children. During this period we moved to Pensacola, Florida, and lived there one year, 1924, but moved back to our farm home. My farm land lay idle that year. One of our sons, Louis, was born in a hospital in Pensacola, the only one to be delivered in a hospital but for which we would have lost this baby. This could have been the providence of God. The year of 1920 was my first year to grow potatoes for market and was the first year that potatoes were shipped from South Alabama to market in the north. There was not enough for shipment in car load lots so the farmer's association shipped the first crop by express. I had planted only 120 pounds, one sack of seed and had produced 1400 pounds, the market price was $6.50 per hundred and my total net sale netted $91.00 from about 1/7 of an acre. This was so much better than cotton, that the farmers turned to potatoes for their money crop. Production increased from year to year and had grown so rapidly that thousands of carloads have been shipped every year since from South Baldwin County.

I increased my dairy cattle herd and sold milk and cream with profit--we introduced other vegetable crops--especially cucumbers also watermelons and sweet potatoes for market. I bought out one retiring farmer's herd of twelve dairy cows and one mule, also his DeLaval cream separator, all for $300.00, $100.00 cash, the balance at $25.00 per month with no interest. I secured him with a mortgage on the cattle, I paid this debt off from the daily sale of cream.

I cleared more of the land on this forty acres, used two mule farming tools, planter, riding plow and cultivator, for some operations I used three mules. I was

really becoming a BIG farmer for that period. The greatest asset from all my farming operations eventually came to be our six sons and two daughters. The greatest blessing for them was growing up where there was always plenty to eat, fresh from field and garden, milk, butter, eggs, meat, and fresh vegetables. But a still greater blessing for all of us was to labor where we all lived by the sweat of our face, not to be shirkers, but workers. But still much above all these temporal blessings were the spiritual environment of a Christian home where we were all one united family in Christ. This will be brought out more fully when this theme changes to our experiences in the Kingdom of our Lord.

But back to the subject of moving from place to place.

We were overwhelmed in the final years with what we felt were unfavorable circumstances regarding our locations. We were three miles by wagon or buggy from store or school, six miles from railroad and place of worship. My children were growing up now among people of other nationalities, many of whom were alienated from God. One man was heard to say, holding up in his hand a $1.00 bill, "This is my god" and this in reply to an invitation to come out to hear a preacher preach the gospel. Other factors also distressed us, too, financial and otherwise. It was our decision to relocate for better or worse. It was like moving to a place where there were no "Joneses," if you know what I mean; this problem of finding a place where there are no bad people. Nevertheless, most people let themselves be motivated by various and sundry influences and so make one mistake after another. We were no exception. But mistake or not, people get settled down then soon "pull up stakes" and run away from one evil to run into another sometimes worse. But who can predict the future?

I was caught in a "bind" here having put my place in the hands of an auctioneering Company to sell it for me. I got a real burn this time. If I refused a final offer I would have to pay their commission anyway. So, it turned out at the sale that few prospective buyers showed up. One, my nearest neighbor, was the only bidder, together we arranged a "deal." He offered me 20 acres he owned on a through highway south of Robertsdale, only 4 acres cleared with only a two-room shack built of rough lumber and a roll-roofing roof, only two 16' x 16' rooms in exchange together with $1000.00 in cash. Considering the difference in location which was a big item with me, his 20 acres was more valuable than my 40 acres. The house only made the big difference. Needing a larger house now for my growing family, I could use the $1000.00 to improve the house on his 20 acres. So I accepted the deal and we closed the trade. The same auctioneers had a house and 12 acres in Summerdale near the railroad, school, and store for $2500.00 and offered me this place. It had a good seven room house, 1 1/2 story, like the one we had owned and were exchanging, so I made a deal with Mr. Burge, who owned the place in Summerdale, paid him the $2500.00 but I had to mortgage it to get the extra $1200.00. The Baldwin County Building and Loan Company took my mortgage for this needed amount and our deal was closed.

We then moved to this place in Summerdale in the fall of 1929, and were more satisfactorially situated, near school (the school house was in sight) in a good school house. Also in a mile of a good general store, but still five miles from Robertsdale where we attended worship services, but this was one mile nearer than we had been.

Now my farming operations took a different turn. I had but little land on this 12 acres, a pecan and orange orchard utilized a good part of it also a pond rendered more of it useless. But we had room for a good garden.

The four acres of cleared land on the place we now owned was three miles away on the road toward Robertsdale.

A widow lady with a daughter was living in the "shack" there. I let them live in it rent free, since I had no need now for the house. But after two years a situation arose and I did need it and then I had trouble getting her to move out. She had not even thanked me for the free use of it for that two years, but refused even to give it up. Her wicked daughter with her, both of them bitterly "cussed me out," with every vile, nasty word in the vocabulary of the wicked. This really did me no harm, "I reviled not" at all, only took it mildly, but they forced me to give them a legal ten-day notice to vacate, but they ignored this and made it doubly my unpleasant use of the county sheriff to force them out with threat of arrest. I had his fee to pay as well. All the interlude I add to my moving and ownership experience, here in the narrative where it occurred.

Our second year here at Summerdale found us in the throws of the Great Depression. As we say "The bottom fell out on Wall Street." (About which I knew nothing and read less and took no account of.) Little dreaming then of the great change it worked for me in my financial standing into which I had so deeply involved myself and family.

I cleared more land on my twenty acres for farming. I rented five acres good farm land adjoining my place in Summerdale. I made good crops, but markets declined, money was virtually cut off. Banks were closed, mortgages were foreclosed. I warded off foreclosure on my $1200.00 mortgage and supported my family from wages I made at a secretary job with a cotton buying firm in Evergreen, Alabama of which one of my brother-in-law was a member. This was a godsend and $100.00 a month in salary.

Our last and ninth baby, Glenn Allen, was born in 1930, the very year of the depression, while I was absent from home on my job at Evergreen. I could not support my family and meet the $60.00 a month payment on the mortgage. I got three months in arrears and a notice of foreclosure. My father sent me a check for $180.00 to pay up the arrears. The loan company accepted his check, gave me a receipt, the check was paid at the bank in Evergreen but the check was cancelled before it cleared the bank in Birmingham. So the loan company revoked my payment and proceeded with the foreclosure. They inspected my building and appraised $120.00 of repairs needed, including some sills in the foundation and some other carpentry work. I agreed to do this work myself and did it all alone, even the 8 x 8 sills replacement by the use of house jacks. This was charged against the mortgage so I had to pay it all for another three months extention. But the foreclosure cost was still added and I owed the whole $1200.00 even though I had paid a whole year, interest left little to be applied to principal.

In the face of all this what could we do but lose our seven room house and move out, but the loan company also had included our other place in the mortgage and we could not move there. Anyway, how could we possibly move into two rooms with furniture for seven rooms and with a family of ten (10)? How was really a big, BIG, question. Impossible you say and seemingly, this was the Only answer, but not for GOD and a family of CHRISTians!

My dear, sweet and I must say GREAT Christian wife and mother went with me to GOD on our knees for the answer, and asked him, "O Father, our Father in heaven, O do show us a way out of this, it is too much for us." HE did answer and soon!

The very next day my wife, while I was still "plowing," literally in my field, and "in HOPE," she got news, (I never asked her who had told her), that an acquaintence and good friend of ours, had in all this depression, withdrawn all his savings through all his 80 years, from his bank, before it had closed. His name,

Mr. McCurdy, and had given all his eight heirs, to each their share of his estate. When my wife heard this, she had the boys hitch a mule to our buggy, left her newborn little baby boy, Glenn Allen, at the house with her sister, and drove over to the home of one of Mr. McCurdy's daughters, Mrs. Kern, and found her home, her share of her father's estate in cash and in her possession. She related to Mrs. Kern, our plight at the point of losing our seven room home in Summerdale, to the building loan company and the next day was to be the day for the sale of it to the highest bidder at 1:00 o'clock p.m. on the front street in Robertsdale in front of Hoiles Store.

Together they agreed for Mrs. Kern to meet us there at that hour, and that she would bid and pay cash the $1200.00 for the mortgage. Both of us met her there before the time advertised. Could you believe that we waited there alone for the hour and for awhile after; that no one showed up, not even a lawyer or any of the personnel of the loan company? (They evidently just concluded that it would not be possible for even one bidder to be there--believing that no soul could show up with $1200.00 in cash, and this would have been the case but for Cora Lee Mancill and Mrs. Kern.)

In these circumstances I suggested we walk up one block to the loan office and find out from Mr. Cummings, the president, just what all their failure to show up for the sale of our property--all of it, two houses, two pieces of real estate.

Can you imagine how surprised he was when we walked in, all together about 1:30 p.m., at his office.

I said only, "Mr. Cummings, do you have at hand the mortgage we made to you for $1200.00?" What a surprise it must have been! He didn't even ask why I asked such a question, for I should have known he had it. All he could legally say was, "Yes," I then said, "We have here the $1200.00 in cash, will you get the mortgage?" He did the only thing he could do, he got it fourthwith. I said to Mrs. Kern, "Will you buy this mortgage?" She said, "I will," and she did, just like the little red hen in Chicken Little. In this case Mr. Cummings took the role of "Chicken Little." I kindly asked Mr. Cummings if he would make out a deed after Mrs. Kern and Mr. Cummings exchanged the mortgage signed "paid" and she counted over the cash.

He was sweet enough to make out the deed to the place in Summerdale to Mrs. Kern. We two signed and he notarized it. Mr. Cummings then made me this offer: "We will build you a house on the twenty acres--" I replied, "Thank you so much, but I will make other arrangements for us a house." And I did. I then told him I would not ask him to build me even an "out-house" on it, if you know what I meant! Then we all walked out. The transaction was completed and we all lived happily thereafter--God be praised, at least as regarded this good fortune.

Then we faced our sixth and our first forced moved and that into the supposed impossible situation, into the two-roomed shack. But we weren't out of debt yet, but we had a house of a sort and twenty acres of valuable real estate clear of mortgage. I still owed $300.00 to the merchant Mr. Jerkewicz at Summerdale for advances in groceries that helped us to bridge our financial plight. I had given him a mortgage on my two mules and wagon. I did not ask for an extention of time on the mortgage nor did he press me for payment, but I voluntarily gave him the mules and wagon after I finished moving into our humble shack. I told him to send for them and he did. I did not even ask for the paid up mortgage or even for a receipt. We had been friends and remained so.

We must have had all this experience in August of 1931, for I remember, that when September came, we were all cozy but somewhat crowded with two double beds and

two mattresses on the floor trundled under the two bedsteads to be retrieved each night into the remaining floor space in a 16' x 16' single bedroom. We had to use the other room for a cooking and dining room.

There was no flue for the wood cook stove, only a hole through the side wall for the stove pipe.

My brother-in-law helped me to start a brick flue from the ground out side. An early cold spell came the day we started and we got it only half-way up when night and cold stopped the work. Some of our family including my wife took the flu, and that night I came down with it and a high fever. He came back the next day but only to keep a fire in the cook stove and keep the house warm to keep us all from developing pneumonia. Luckily, he did not get sick with it and our twelve year old girl, Annie Lee, also escaped it. We had some good near neighbors, the Racine family, and they were our good Samaritans to bring us food and leave it outside for us. We recovered in a few days and soon afterward had the flue finished and our house safe from the hazard of fire.

My then aged and good Christian father, through God's grace, had saved his money when the Banks were closed down. I didn't ask him how nor did he tell me how he accomplished this. His check of $180 he had sent me prior to this was a first priority claim and was made good a year or two later when they were opened through government aid. Anyway, without any request from me, he sent me $500.00 to help me with building an addition to the two rooms we had. With this I bought the cheapest materials available and set to work with only the help of two teenaged sons, John and Floyd Edmond. We went to the forest and explored for pitch pine logs and from them cut out sills also some house blocks. I built the main pillars of brick doing the bricklaying at which I had no previous training. I bought rough framing and air dried 105 drop siding, sheet metal for the roof and with these materials I designed and constructed a four-room one-and-a-half story addition, joining it to the two existing rooms. The floor in these rooms were of wide rough (undressed and ungroved sun and air dried boards 10 and 12 inches wide), it made a rough floor but at least it was a floor. We lived there in this house until we sold out in the early 40's, approximately ten years.

I farmed these years, hard, long hours of labor. At first, after the loss of my farm animals, I bought one good mule for $50.00. I never owned a better farm animal, the next year I bought another cheap mule, a riding turn plow and a riding cultivator on credit from a dealer. I also had to buy seed potatoes and all my fertilizer on credit, but somehow with limited success and income I managed to survive. We had kept our dairy cows and bought more and raised some along. I also raised hogs, and some of the finest registered Duroe Jerseys. I sold some cows now and then also had some to butcher, both porkers and young beef. With a good garden and a flock of white Leghorn laying hens we had eggs to sell, we were never in danger of starving. This was the making of strong sons and daughters, healthy, hearty, always ready to work at whatever came to hand. They learned through the ten depression years their best lessons of thrift, industry, self reliance and how to make an independent living. None of them has ever regretted these years of learning and labor, lessons they never could have learned so well as on that old farm. They also learned how to appreciate a day or a part of a day to be free and roam to the forests and streams, to fish, hunt, swim, or play.

At the beginning years of the forties, when our government became involved in the second world war, the call came strong for workers in plants, army bases, and in the military services.

I had found small jobs along in the late thirties after having worked on government projects in connection with my farming, all of which supplemented my limited income. Among these jobs, first was work on the W.P.A. government subsidized public works on roads, parks, forests, etc. at which I worked for some time with, shovel, axe and pick, clearing, building new roads, and bridges. This was manual labor of the most strenuous kind. Later on a call came for any with former teaching qualifications and experience to report for jobs in the field of Adult Education. I accepted this call and for several years engaged in teaching all who would come to my classes the basic skills, writing, reading, arithmetic, etc. Each summer the state-wide personnel in this project were called together at state educational centers for a two-week seminar for training by prominent educators. We met each year at a different State Institution, Auburn University, Montevallo, University of Alabama, and I was among the group to go to Knoxville, Tennessee, University of Tennessee for a course in Workers Education.

During these trips away from our farm, the farm work was left for my wife to oversee and our children to carry on. They deserve great praise for the work well done.

In 1939, I got my first carpentry job on the construction of the Grand Hotel at Point Clear, Baldwin County. I had to join the Carpenter's Union and for this work was paid $1.00 and hour.

When the Air Force Base of Brookley Field was being constructed, I went to Mobile where my first work was on the Ann Street Housing Project, and from this job I responded to a call for carpenters in Civil Service at Brookley, at $1800.00 per year. This was a long daily drive from Robertsdale so I had to find a boarding place for Monday through Friday.

This change in employment resulted in the phasing out of our farming and dairying operations and finally to the sale of our realty holdings in Baldwin County.

During the period of the depression, through the 30's, we had purchased additional land, first a 10-acre piece, after an additional forty acres all adjoining our twenty acres. We sold it all at a profit, also sold all the stock and farm equipment, giving up farming altogether.

About six members of our family hired in at Brookley for Civil Service. This necessitated our seventh move from Baldwin now to Mobile County.

At first we rented homes moving again into another rented house also a second time, this time into the government housing project I had worked at constructing. While living there, we found a house for sale on 1064 Arlington Street. We bought it in 1942 and moved there where we lived the next four years.

In 1946 we found a place for sale on Hollinger's Island, 10 miles out of town, fronting on Mobile Bay--we bought the property, rented out our place in Mobile City and moved out into the "country" for good, better, and best.

Here I encountered a general improvement job on the camp-like building on this property. There were four of our teenaged sons unmarried and living at home with us. Without their wonderful working strength and ability to supplement my own, we never could have improved this property so much and so well as we did. This proved to be the wisest move of all our many past efforts, mistakes and misjudgements. We worked, all of us, not only at improving this fine location on Mobile Bay but also local jobs away from home. The two younger sons were finishing high school, the two older sons and myself held regular jobs, they in the shipyards and I in civil service in Brookley.

We kept Arlington Street house rented to pay itself out and our income also paid out the property on the Bay.

I borrowed money then from the Bank, improved the house on Arlington and sold it for $9000.00, paid off all the debts and put $6000.00 in a joint account in the Brookley Credit Union, at 6% interest in both our names.

I continued to work on Civil Service until in my seventieth year and when my wife reached sixty-five. I then retired in the year 1959, with ten years in Civil Service and a good account from my public work on Social Security.

After receiving our first Social Security checks in April we took off on our first full vacation in all of our forty-six years of family life. We rented our house, all furnished, to some good people we knew, for six months, and took off to California with our oldest grandson driving. At the time he was in the Navy and stationed at Oakland, California. His grandmother Sharrets was old and infirm and wanted him home to see him for the last time and his grandmother Mancill wanted him home specifically for a driver on our vacation. She was the one to work the scheme to get him leave through the Red Cross to come to Alabama to his ailing grandmother. Of course, grandma Mancill kept the driving scheme out of the request for his leave but anyway, it served the double purpose. Grandma Mancill was also ailing with angina and diabetes but was very alert and needed very much the lift of a vacation. She had never had more than a brief trip to Chicago when our son Eddie in the Navy was graduated from Great Lakes Training School in the Amphibious Landing Infantry, for which he had volunteered, this was in 1943. Now, to 1959, he was stationed in Long Beach, California, and living in Aniheim, California in sight almost of Disneyland and Knotts Berry Farm. Besides there was another of our sons, then living ten miles from San Francisco at Corte Madera in Martin County. This son had lived in California since the close of the Korean War during which he was there in the U.S. Air Force, but was now since 1954 a civilian. These circumstances contributed to a very enjoyable vacation for six months for both of us and for joy to all their families including our six grandchildren.

We went first through San Francisco, the city on our arrival at night on our fourth day out of Houston, Texas where we stopped over the first night from Mobile, our two sons and families were together to greet us there in Houston.

We did some sightseeing on this trip going through New Mexico. We stopped at a ranch show place, then on to Flagstaff, Arizona for our 2nd overnight motel stop at 10:00 p.m. The next day we made almost 700 miles, by 11:00 p.m. arriving at our son "Bill's" in Corte Madera. The next day he took us to Muir Woods--Red Woods Forest on Mt. Tamalpias. Our grandson, Jack, left us here to return to his base at Oakland across the Bay from San Francisco.

The next week my wife and I departed on a trip to Los Angeles and Aneheim, because we wanted to spend the first month with Floyd Edmond, "Eddie," and his family, for he was to leave on a six month's cruise to the West Pacific on his ship, the light Cruiser Toledo, and would not return in time to be with him at all, unless we visited them before he left. We left San Francisco on a Monday morning and stopped at Monterey, California for two nights with a nephew of hers, James Bruce Jordan, who was also in the Navy and stationed there. We visited with him one night through the 17 mile tour of the exclusive residential area of mansion homes and grounds, where he had the pass from a navy colonel whom he chauffered on occasions. No one not known by some resident was ever allowed to drive through this exclusive area. This was truly a magnificent sightseeing trip. It was a vast cypress forest with wild deer all along by the drive and grazing on the magnificent green spacious lawns around these exclusive mansions, it was as we would say, "a breathtaking scenery."

The next day with his Japanese wife, we visited fisherman's wharf there at the harbor on Monterey Bay, to shop at the stalls also to view the spacious bins filled with every sort of ocean fish, tons and tons of great fish, sea bass, tuna, and you name them, some being unloaded from the ocean fishing schooners.

Bruce and his good wife gave up their one bedroom for our use and made for themselves a "pallet," we would say, on the living room floor and slept there. Bruce would not hear for us to leave the next day but anxiously insisted we stay over another night so that his Aunt Lee could make him a dish of chicken and dumplings, American style. We consented and this is why we had to go to the wharf to shop for chicken. When he returned from his day at his office, (he was of some high rank) she had the dish ready for our evening meal. He also had on hand the half of a venison carcass that he wanted me, with my butcher experience, to cut into suitable cuts for wrapping and freezing. We had enjoyed barbecue steaks from it for our first evening meal.

The next day we continued on into the Los Angeles area on the Freeway 101 which follows the ocean side route from San Diego to Seattle, Washington. We arrived that evening at Floyd and Ann's home in Aneheim, California.

While with them we visited Knotts Berry Farm. There we truly enjoyed the relics on display of the early schooner wagons that really saw service on the overland journey to the West in the Gold Rush days of 1849 and the early railway wood burning locomotive and train; other relics of the West, too many to mention. This resort we liked even better than the sights at Disneyland, which we also visited for a whole day. While with them we had a wonderful experience to be invited for a Dependent's Cruise on his ship, the Cruiser Toledo, across to the island off shore twenty miles. They dropped anchor sent a helicopter ashore, did other maneuvers as refueling from a supply ship while cruising alongside, a rescue practice with a dummy being rescued from the ocean. The highlight of the trip was the noonday meal in the officer's quarters, (our son, Floyd, was an officer). All the officers and all their dependents present were at tables together. This was a great day for us all and one never to be forgotten.

While at Aneheim, we made several trips to the ocean side, to the Marine Land of the Pacific North of Long Beach, California.

At Long Beach, we saw oil wells, so many we did not try to count, but in one place we saw thirteen wells on a fenced in area of not more than a half-acre of land. There has been so much oil pumped out from under the floor of the ocean that the area of the Navy Base there has sunk below sea level and has required dikes to prevent the tide from covering the area.

When time came for his ship to leave on the cruise, we made plans to return to San Francisco and to stay the remaining five months with our son, W. H. "Bill" at Corte Madera. About that time, there was a notice that the local school board had purchased a ten-acre parcel of land for a high school building which had an orchard of orange trees loaded with a crop of fine oranges and that anybody who wanted any would be allowed to gather all they wanted. Eddie Jr., went with me and we loaded the trunk of our car with these fine oranges--enough to last us at Bill's all summer. We all really had a real treat of fruit.

I did not spend all that summer in idleness but took a job at $4.80 an hour in a cabinet shop operated by the firm where Bill was employed. I worked most of the summer and made $1200.00 in wages. I could help Bill with our expenses while there and this helped us not to be burdensome on our visit.

All that summer we were with his family every Lord's Day to worship where they

were members at San Rafael. We were happy to make acquaintance with so many fine Christian people on our visit. At our leaving, the church had a breakfast on the Beach of San Francisco Bay also boat rides for everyone. This was an unusual event. Before leaving Corte Madera, we were invited on a tour of San Quinton State Prison, the buildings of which were in sight of our bedroom looking across a bay inlet of San Francisco Bay. Three of our Christian brethern at San Rafael were guards there. They obtained passes for the three of us, Bill, his mother and me. We had never seen before this or since a gas death chamber, or had a dinner in a prison. We visited many areas, one where they spun, wove and made the white garments for the inmates using the prisoners to do all the work, really it is a cotton mill.

One other event I must not omit, was a fishing trip on a charter fishing schooner out under the Golden Gate Bridge for a day's salmon fishing in the Pacific Ocean. Bill and I were successful to catch in all 21 pounds of salmon. He lost one that would have weighed 40 pounds or more. I landed one ten pounder and was so happy I jumped up and down on the deck while he flopped; also one other a five pounder and Bill one also a five pound. One man in our party brought in a twenty-nine pounder, the largest one for the day. We left out from and returned to Sal Solitio a city and boat harbor on San Francisco Bay. While there, we spent a day on July 4th in the San Francisco Golden Gate Park, also a day at the Zoo, and a day at the Hall of Science and Zoology. Here we saw real mounted adult size animals in artificial real-life surroundings, from all parts of the world. Come September from April and we bid goodbye to our dear ones and began our return trip just the two of us.

We planned our trip back to include more sightseeing and not to rush. We stopped our first night at a motel in Barstow, California where we spent two nights, one day at Calico, California, a ghost silver mining town, settled by the Knotts from East. Here were the old buildings more than 100 years old, even the old metal water tank which was used for storing water hauled from miles away. We were told that they once brought in water contaminated with typhus germs, and as a result of the people drinking this water, most all the babies and almost all the adults died with typhoid fever.

There was the same narrow gauge rail track--the dummy locomotive and the cars that brought out the silver laden ore from a tunnel that followed the vein of ore all the way through that peak of the mountain. Here many millions of dollars worth of silver made the Knott family all millionaires. This family was the same that moved on into the Anaheim area after the ore was exhausted and settled into a berry raising industry that made them other millions. They set up their own processing plants where they made all the products from their own berry farm and also their own marketing system which still continues. To miss seeing this work and market is to miss the most interesting tourist attraction on the Pacific Coast, at least this is my estimation of it.

I will resume our trip home here. After visiting Calico Ghost Town and its sights and the cemetery where all their dead were buried under rock mounds with wooden grave markers, we ended our day and returned to our Motel room at Barstow.

The next day we journeyed on to Williams, Arizonia and stayed overnight. The next day we travelled 59 miles to the site of the South rim of the Grand Canyon in Arizona. Here we stayed all day and saw what we could of this great gulf cut through to the depth of three miles by the 200 boot wide Colorado River. This is rated one of the seven or more greatest wonders of the world. We lingered all day,

then drove east through wondrous mountain vastnesses to reach the highway from Arizona to Utah.

On this mountain road night overtook us. This was most unfortunate and resulted in my wife having a spell with her heart. We stopped by the highway and as providence would have it, we had with us a bag of cracked ice. This assisted in helping her recover from the attack sufficiently for us to proceed on our way in hopes of reaching a motel as soon as possible. We reached the highway leaving those unwanted mountains behind and at ten o'clock that night reached a motel. We were indeed relieved and happy to retire to rest after this long and tiresome day. Our rest gave us the needed strength to continue our daytime driving. From here we drove on into Flagstaff, Arizona, thinking to stop there for our Sunday worship service. By inquiring we found the Church of Christ meeting place, at about the appropriate time for morning worship to learn a day too late that there was no service. The preacher's wife was on her way to their laundry room for her clothes washing. Alas it was one day too late. We discovered we were novices at age seventy, at least at touring the states, but this was a sin--if a sin, which it doubtless was, of neglect and ignorance. We at least learned that thinking the day was the Lord's Day did not make it true. How sorrowful we were that we had spent his day in sightseeing pleasure. We just had lost track of the days. Too late now to change what had happened, all we could do was repent and pray God for forgiveness and resolve not ever to repeat this oversight, we did not do such again.

We spent the remainder of the Monday with the preacher and his family, also that Monday night and learned he had preached for the church in Laurel, Mississippi, where our own kin folks and where one of my brothers-in-law was an Elder, brother Leonard Swan. This overnight stay gave us an early morning start on our way through New Mexico where we stopped over the next night. We were rested up and started out next morning before daylight, being somewhat more anxious to get this travel over.

On the way early in the quiet of the morning, no traffic much on the road gave us more leisure to watch the jackrabbits and once a skunk crossed in front of us. We slowed down to miss him knowing he would divide his perfume with us.

Then looking ahead on this long, lonesome road through an almost uninhabited area of West Texas--and happy to approach any light that we sighted ahead, I observed one light in red which I took to be a lookout forest tower, which I expected soon to pass. On the other side of the highway was a bright white shining light and I wondered if we were nearing a town. I seemed not to be approaching it in the distance but kept observing it. I said to Lee, "I wonder what light that bright one is on the left, which we could now see through the tree tops and that we must soon pass as we had the red one." But no, we had to wait until daylight or until we passed it to find out what it was. Soon daylight broke and astonished we learned we had been for hours trying to pass "The Morning Star!" I had heard the expression "the Bright and Morning Star," now we had found and seen it. We were delighted to know we had not passed it as we had so recently past His full day. This gave me a story, indeed, two real events, I have told over and over since those memorable days and nights we lived through but once. These are here committed to writing to be read perhaps, many days hence.

We proceeded on through West Texas to Austin, passing the great marble quarry from which all the marble for the beautiful state capital building had been constructed.

While in Austin, we went to the State School for the Deaf to visit my deaf

brother's son, Emmett, who was a student there at the time. He was away with all the boys on a camping trip. They gave me directions to the camp on a creek in the area and we found them in time to be with them at their noonday meal. He was happily surprised and was permitted to sit with us at the visitors table.

That afternoon we drove on into Houston for a one month's stay with our two sons there. Our return to Mobile required another day's time. We returned to our home on Mobile Bay with many memories of our six-month second honeymoon. This was the beginning of our retirement years and our trips of travel later to places in the eastern states; several trips to Jacksonville, Florida, one up to New Jersey and one into New York City, via Washington D.C. We spent all our time together on the road or at home, and enjoyed every day of these remaining years. Every Lord's Day we were together at worship services wherever that hallowed day found us, unless sickness or hospitalization kept one or the other away.

The Camille Hurricane was the cause of our last move together by which our home on the Bay was so badly damaged we had to abandon it and live in a trailer the last years of our fifty-seven years together.

Cora Lee, my dear darling Christian wife and constant companion, fought bravely for twelve long years, against her affliction with angina and diabetes. The shock of the dreadful loss of our pleasant home and house where we had lived peaceably and happily from 1946 to that sad day and sight of 1969. This shock she found very difficult to overcome in her weakened condition. After two years, she took her last journey to the hospital and died there on the 29th day of May, 1971.

I have constantly believed her death should not have come so suddenly or so soon, that she could have and should have lived many more years. Perhaps I have been wrong in so thinking. But I know she wanted so much to live many more years to enjoy and continue to strive to help her own dear sons and two dear daughters especially to live righteously and Godly lives in this present world. She loved all of them and her many friends so much, and so enjoyed the presence and company of us all that she yearned to live for the good she could have continued to render to them with her kindly concern and wise counsel. She wanted so much to see everyone around her to be happy and in pleasant surroundings.

Her last words to me were, "Be good to all our dear ones, especially to Annie," and to our wonderful grandchildren" (twenty-five in number) "and to our sweet little great grandchildren" (then number seventeen). Then she said, "I'm going to die" and "Let's have a little prayer." It was a silent one, our last moments together, no words ever adequate to express our deep feelings. I was speechless, but my heart was in communion with our Redeemer. We kissed and simply said, "God be with you, we will meet again."

Her funeral was two days later, June 1st, at the place where we had sat together for many years and with so many had worshipped together.

There were two sweet songs she had loved and so often we had sung together, sung now on this occasion by four brethren in harmony, "Be With Me Lord" and "Take Time to be Holy." Beautiful tributes to us in our long fifty years of Christian life together, especially to her so dear as she must have been to her Lord and such a comfort to me because of her sweet sacrificial life with me and for the love and devotion she had so tenderly manifested toward her little boys and girls in their infancy and childhood. She was a most devoted mother to each of them and they all loved her dearly.

Many tender and loving words from the four or five ministers who had a part in

the service that day in greatful tribute to her memory and of her long and devoted life to her Lord and Savior.

Her form was tenderly laid to rest in Pine Crest Cemetery, Mobile, Dauphin Island Parkway, by which we had past so many times on our way to worship every Lord's Day, also on so many other trips in the Lord's service visiting the sick, encouraging the weak and to pray with and for them.

I have missed her most as a companion in this work in the Lord's cause, when she was at my right hand to help and encourage me as well as each day wherever we were, we were always together in every possible occasion, and apart only when my secular work required it.

After the loss of our home and then three years later my loss of so dear a companion, some wondered then just what would be my solace to heal such loss. One or two, at worship's close, did voice their concern for me with the question, "Now, Brother Mancill, what will you do?" Without hesitation and with my mind settled on my duty, I readily answered this question without distraction, I replied, "With God's blessings I purpose to do more, as long as he lets me live, for his kingdom than I have ever in a like period done before," and this is my one aim for my remaining time here. To God be all the praise and glory.

THE LAST CHAPTER OF MY MEMOIRS
ELLIOTT DEVOCIOUS MANCILL

Date composed began 9-17-81 at age 93 in my cabin on the John Jackson Mancill's Memorial Cemetery and Park. My father, Edmond Mancill, named me for two of his cousins, Elliott Mancill and Devocious Mancill. I have a name sake, my great grandson, Elliott Devocious Mancill II, born to my grandson Charlie and of his wife Dianna (Pearson) Mancill.

I am beginning this chapter on Thursday, three days after my 93rd birthday.

My physical strength is phenominal at my age, but has abated noticeably. I walk with a "walking stick," for safety demanded by forethought.

My health is par excellent; no lung, liver, kidney, spleen or heart disease. My doctor said "There is no reason for you not to attain a full century expectancy. For all past and present blessings I am trully thankful to my heavenly Father whom I purpose to serve in spirit and in TRUTH, His WORD in spirit and truth in which only is maximum freedom.

RESTORATION OF OLD HOMESTEAD
FROM 1966 TO 1982

Here I begin an account of my decision to acquire possession of my grandfather, John Jackson Mancills, 1840 homestead site near Red Level, Covington County, Alabama.

When he proved his claim and had built his split log cabin, there was no Alabama and Florida L & N Railroad line in this County. The nearest R. R. Station was on the Montgomery Mobile main line 20 miles West at Evergreen, Alabama and all of both Covington County and the present Conecuh County were all one county then titled Conecuh County. Andalusia hauled freight by mule and oxteam from the nearest freight Railroad lines.

John Jackson Mancill entered claim with the U.S. Land office in Washington D.C. for two 40's; 79 acres more or less. When he proved his claim by improvements, by living on it and clearing a farm, he received a grant from the land office, drawn up and signed by the then officer, and this sheep-skin document has on it the name of Franklin Pierce, President of the United States. This rare document is now in the possession of my executor, Gerald W. Mancill, Mobile, Alabama.

Mr. Thomas Grant, President of the Delaware Land and Timber Company, was living and owner of this land. Upon my request and stated purpose to reclaim the home site, and to restore and maintain it well cared for; he sold me one acre which included the cemetery, the log cabin, and the last usable dug well.

At the age of 85 I received the deed after I had it surveyed and mapped by a licensed surveyor. I began in earnest and on my own labor to clear up the wild growth, first on the cemetery.

Prior to this last undertaking, in the year 1966, with my deaf brother, Gillis Mancill, and the same year Mr. Grant had given me a deed for 30 x 30 = 900 square feet, covering only the burial plot of five burials, after the same time Mr. Grant was planting long leaf yellow pine seedling on all the open farm land, we were working here two weeks to clear off and pour a 6 inch concrete slab 18 x 20 ft. to cover over all the burials. We also then poured a set of steps up the 4 ft. high bank at the public road so our older sister could visit the cemetery. The house site then was so overgrown with briars, waist high weeds, dense wild rose vines, wild bushes, shrubs, trees of every specie that they could not walk through it to go to the cemetery. They made good use of those steps and came to visit many times before their deaths - all now are past and gone - I only of all that generation of my fathers family. I have a few cousins now (9-18-81) left on my mothers side. Louella (Gibbons) Gotier, Gotier Miss. & Abba Gibbon's sons and daughters, Houston, Texas.

While working on the cemetery for two weeks in 1965, Gillis and I stayed with Minnie and her son Roland Shaver and drove the seven miles morning and evening.

We removed the old fallen down woven wire fence that our father had put around the grave sites twenty or more years before and dug out a wild berry bearing peach tree from the plot. It bore only berries and every berry was a potential new tree, so undesirable. Also the plot and fence was a mass of saw briar vines from timbers buried a foot under the surface. We ridded it of this pest by pouring a concrete slab 6 inches thick over the entire burial site. Then poured on top of this a 4 inch raised slab of concrete over the exact location of each grave site, also a separate footing for the headstones for each grave.

In 1974 I returned to the area, boarded with Pearson and Daisey Martin, my second cousins and proceeded to clear off the jungle after obtaining a deed and survey, putting down concrete corner and line markers. These relatives of mine were very kind and considerate of me and showed much appreciated hospitality over a long period while I was working on the lot. I shared with them the cost of their expense for food and a room in their home. Pearson was ninety years of age. He lived to see the clearing finished and died after 91. I spent almost three years working at intervals, mostly alone and driving from and back to Mobile during this period.

About this year, 1977, I made a decision to establish a residence on the property and induced my oldest daughter, Annie Lee, and her husband to move their mobile home from Mobile and set it up near the site of the old dilapidated log cabin.

So I had a septic tank installed for their trailer home, and a deep well drilled 130 feet down and through first, a tier of limestone rock then on down through a tier of red sandstone into white sand, gravel and fragments of sea shell to reach the underground water bed of pure clear water. The seashell fragments is evidence that the Gulf of Mexico bottom was this far inland. In fact I have been told, and it is stated in geography of the region, that in the Alabama River Valley this evidence has been found as far North as the Montgomery area.

The water level rose in my 5 inch PVC (plastic pipe) to a depth of thirty (30 ft). Making an inexhaustable water supply in my well. The check valve at the end of my 1 1/2" pipe is 18 feet below the water level. The cost of the drilling pump and pipe came to $1400.00. The septic tank and installation cost was $450.00.

Next was the work on the old fashioned dug well. The area where it was located was knee deep in a tangle of Vaginia creaper, briars, and muscadine vines so dense there was no visable evidence of any well and only some rotting boards for evidence of Walker William's (one time owner) of his out door privy (outhouse), about 20 feet away from the well. I had visited him many years before when he lived in a frame house and I knew where his well was located; for this reason I knew about where it was located. So I located and found a roll of woven fencing wire crammed in the opening on the ground level. I removed the wire, covered the opening with boards for safety.

I decided to restore the well if I could find an experienced and willing man to rig up to send a man into it to clean out the mud and regain the water supply. I inquired of the nearest neighbor, Mr. Braxton Mills, and he gave me the name of a black man at Gantt, on Conecuh River. I found him reluctant but persuaded him to get the job done for me. At the time he was head waiter and dressed for the job as waiter in the popular restaurant located at Gantt. He had only Sundays off from his job. He agreed to bring his long unused rig-windlass rope, stand and all with three strong young black men, two to operate the windlass, handle on each end and one smaller man willing to go into the well to the bottom 55 feet down. Fortunately the well was originally with regular cement tile well curbing, 30 inches in diameter, in 3 ft sections to fit together, starting at the bottom and extending upward to within 3 ft of the ground surface. This tile was 1 1/2" thick and of strong cement.

They all worked all day, draw up in 5 gallon buckets the mud that had collected in the bottom to a depth of several feet. When it was all shoveled up and the walls washed down, with the water freed to run in, the water rose up in the curb to the depth of seven (7) feet. They did this hard work for a very reasonable sum that I was happy to pay, only $100.00.

I had to buy, and was fortunate to find, two more sections that fit into the other curb, each 3 ft x 30" in diameter. They put this in for me to bring the curb up to 3 feet above the surface.

Then I had a weeks job alone to set a form and mix up and pour a hexagon slab on the surface around this extended section above the surface. I mixed in a pile of half bricks placing them first then pouring on the concrete I mixed in batches until finished.

I then built a square board around the section of concrete curb above slab level of material salvaged from the old log cabin, pieces that were solid heart pine that had been in use over 130 years. I built the frame first then ran the boards perpendicularly rather than horizontally around the square frame inclosing the section of curb above the slab. Next I covered the top with an opening in the

center for the well bucket to be drawn up through and made a screen wire frame to slide closed and open with a hinged cover over it for protection. No crawling lizards, bugs, flying insects or even an adventurous snake could enter to fall to the bottom and into the drinking water. For a time I had thought of putting a pipe and electric pump in this well and pipe it to the trailer, but decided not to do this because the county board would not approve the water for drinking purpose from an open well, and too, my neighbors had experience from shallow wells to fail of water in this area so I had to have a deep well for purity and unfailing water supply.

My next problem was to build a shelter over the shallow well and devise a windlass with which to draw the water with a rope, bucket and a pulley up above fastened to the roof framing. The old fashioned roller windlass with a handle crank to turn it had long been relegated to be abandoned for a pipe and a hand or gas propelled pump, so not one was to be found ready made, so of necessity, "The mother of invention" required that a windlass be devised. I readily found a discarded drum or spool, commonly used for wire by electric supply companies, with flanged ends and hole in the two ends center for an axle on which to wind and unwind commercial house wiring. I used a 1 1/2" steel pipe threaded for flanges to fasten it to the wood with screws. I had to use two pieces and join them on a coupling to make the desired length. With an ell (L) fitting for the riser handle bar and a reducer fitting for the hand turning or crank to fit the hand better. After the right length riser bar another (L) ell was necessary for the horrizontal handle 1/2 inch bar.

With this all completed I learned by trial and error that when turning the windlass forward with the weight of a bucket of water pulling in opposition to the forward turn the force loosened the threads on the coupling, so it was necessary to take it apart, have the threads cut farther, enough to put on an extra coupling to use as a lock on the other coupling to hold it fast. This done, it was ready for permanent use. The flange threaded on against the spool end was made secure with screws through holes in it. I put up a temporary bar to hang the pulley for immediate use. We used the water from this well, boiling what we drank, until we had the deep well in use. We did not move the mobile home here until we had the new well and had the electricity brought in later. Also, I deferred erecting the well shelter until later.

Around 1978, in clearing the jungle I had the wonderful help of my two older sons, John Elliott and Floyd Eddie. They had a chainsaw each and in one day they had most of the bushes, shrubs and trees down, trimed of branches and cut in short lengths. Then it became my task to pile and burn all this debris and it required weeks of hard labor from me at an advanced age, but I made away with it all. I took my own good time and had my wheelbarrow along for a handy seat to rest when I felt the need to.

John Elliott had a Gravely mower and with this efficient machine operated on gasoline he made litter fast out of weeds, vines, bushes and wild roses. To see it today with a nice green lawn kept in good care by my industrious and efficient worker, my son-in-law, Edward P. Horan, ex-navy W.W.II sailor, from Boston, Mass. No one could visualize the jungle it had been for so many years. It has been changed into a beautiful homesite.

Finally I made up my mind to build for myself a little frame cottage adjacent to their mobile home and between the two wells. I laid out the size and shape with only mental plans, no blue print, set the block for the foundation, laid the sills, floor joists nailed all firmly together, laid the sub floor, left this unnailed at

first until all was laid and fitted at the joints, fitted and nailed down the 2 x 4 rat sills, laid out the placement for the studding on the rat sills and the top plates. I erected the wall studding, plumbed it and braced it. I had some help to raise the sections and doubled the top plates, cut and erected the rafters. All this done with but little help. I hired two men carpenters to lay and nail down the roof sheathing. They also put on the roll roofing for me and one man helped put on the outside plywood panelling with the windows set in the walls.

I then, alone, laid the plywood finished floor and nailed it down. After this I put the insulation between the studding in the wall.

Later Glenn and his brother-in-Law, Freddy Black, with another of my sons, Floyd, came up and in one day put up the sheetrock overhead and panelled all the walls, a quick and splendid ceiling job. I had already tacked in the insulation between the ceiling joists overhead. Glenn, my youngest son, painted the overhead sheetrock ceiling and sometime later came from his home in Houston, Texas, two separate trips, first he put in a fiberglass 300 gal. septic tank for my cabin and opened the drain line and put in bahaia hay instead of gravel, mostly by hand. Mr. Davis, my neighbor, did come with his tractor and a bottom plow, made several trips one way to open up a drain line. Glenn brought one man to work helping him with the hand shovel work, and in one day he finished the job.

Glenn came back again later on and in one day put in a shower and lavatory that Freddie Black gave him to give to me. I went with him to Andalusia that morning and he brought back a commode, then he laid out on the floor of one of my rooms an area to install it, all for me, nailing down a 2 x 4 on the floor for a ratsill, with an opening for a 2 ft door. He installed the shower, the lavatory and commode, putting in all the pipe for hot and cold water and the drain pipe to the septic tank. He worked until 8 p.m. to leave it all complete, setting up the hot water gas heater outside near the pump and water supply. Making all the connections for gas and water including a space gas heater, he did not leave for Pensacola until all was done. I very much doubt if ever any plumber did as much in the same time-he even put in and wired a ceiling light in this toilet minature room. He has a license as a master electrician in the city of Houston where he has lived all his working career, since he graduated at age 19 from high school in Mobile, Alabama.

To finish my cabin he hung the old heart pine laminated door. The door had nails 2 inches apart to form a checked pattern. The door was taken from my grandfathers log cabin, the door he made in the 1840's, but to finish the cabin my son, Floyd Eddie, brought from Pensacola where he lives a solid core, 1 3/8 x 3' x 6' front door with an outside metal storm door all framed and hung and after arriving here he installed it in the opening I had framed in my cabin, he, also, is a master mechanic, engineer Warrent 4 Navy Officer with 30 years in the Navy from 1942 to 1972, retired.

RECOGNITION OF CHILDREN

These three men here in my memoirs, John Elliott Sr., Floyd Edmond and Glenn Allen, leaves two more unmentioned, but I am constrained to bring their names deserving of recognition in my memoirs. The older of the two, Louis Clifford, stayed on the farm with me longer, volunteered for W W II, served three years in the Army, was in the Army of German occupation at the end, joined the National Guards at his discharge rated as Mess Sergeant. His unit was called to the Korean

war, served as Mess Sergeant at the war front, at the last volunteered as member of an Entertaining Unit, for the boys back from the battle zone until his tour, in action, with the National Guard. In civilian life he has been in continuous employ of a large air conditioning company in Houston, Texas and will likely stay with them with top pay until he retires.

The memoirs of my six sons is a memoir of mine also never to be forgotten. Here I will resume regarding John Elliott, the oldest and now retired from the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners with a 25 year retirement with them. His work and skill has been very outstanding with many contractors in Mobile, Alabama through the years, since the beginning of W W II, and includes foreman on many jobs on buildings of all concrete, setting and constructing forms for columns and floors. His last work was foreman and worker on the Church of Christ worship buildings in Mississippi and in Citronelle, Alabama and on the Church of God building in the Bayou La Batre area.

I must not overlook my next to the youngest son who has lived in California through all his work after his time in the U.S. Air Force. This is W. H. "Bill" now living in Petaluma, California, Sanoma County. While in the Air Force in the late 40's and early 50's he was sent first to Japan and from there to Korea for the duration of that war. Last he was sent to McClellan A.F.B., Sacramento, California. When his time was up he took a job in Civil Service as a supply officer in McClellan, Sacramento. There he met at worship services a young lady Marjorie Hamilton from Washington State. In course of time they were married and he has and will remain in California. He has made a success as a salesman and businessman in Soft Goods Merchandising and is buying an interest in Bryant Enterprises Roseville California. Their sales last year reached a million dollars. He is also one of the two elders of the Petaluma Church of Christ.

One other son is also very deserving of a large space in my life and memoirs, this is Gerald Winfred, the fourth son and my only son to graduate from college. First from Auburn State University with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering, in the top ten of a class of 350 students. He was in the employment of the Alabama Dry Dock and Ship Building Company of Mobile, Alabama where he began working as an electrician's helper after graduating with honors from Murphy High School Mobile, Alabama. He graduated from Auburn in the co-op-plan, 3 months at the shipyard working and 3 months at school at Auburn. This way and by going to night school at the University of Alabama extension college, while working days at the plant and one semester at Spring Hill College to begin with where he had to enter the sophomore class in math because it was the only class available, this class he took instead of freshman math.

After graduating at Auburn and after he was married to Evelyn Hare and one son was born to them, while he was in college at Auburn, the ship building company through its President granted to him, because of his high scholastic record at Auburn, a $5,000.00 scholorship to Massachusetts Institute of Technology "MIT" for two years. He had to take his wife and son with him and his second child, a girl, Claire was born in Cambridge. I sent him $65.00 a month for his rent the second year. He held up with great stress and strain, some nights reading all night, but triumphed and made two hard earned degrees, Marine Engineering and Ship Architecture. For a long time his responsibility was equal to that of Vice President of the company, doing the job of trial run of the ships when one was judged ready again for sea duty. Lately he has been given the duty of Industrial Engineer.

I have already written something of Glenn Allen's life work, but nothing of his recent turn to business affairs. Instead of manual labor in which he had high attainments, but lately in life he has turned to business having invested by borrowing money, having established good credit and has bought into apartment property, land and buildings and entered the rental field which is high and flourishing in the city of Houston, Texas. Thousands of new families are moving into the city daily. He is making a good profit above his liabilities and it is paying off and constantly increasing. It carries a big risk as does all business transactions, he is bravely taking the risks and he must know that the higher one climbs in material wealth the farther one falls in event of a collapse. But someone has said; "Hitch your wagon to a STAR!" One never gets to the top in any field of endeavor except by faithful endeavor.

There is a mark in all high aims. There is a wise warning in God's book that is worth reading and heeding. I will not quote it here only advise that it be duly considered and in all seriousness; found in the fifth chapter of the Lord's brother James' letter written, "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," and applicable to all Christians.

4 REUNION CELEBRATIONS

Now it would be unfair to all my decendents and to my many friends and dear brothers, in the Lord's church, if I should overlook including in my memoirs to wit, the birthday celebrations in my later years.

The first was for my eightieth while my wonderful lifes companion, Cora Lee could celebrate with me at our long remembered home on Mobile Bay Front, Hollingers Island in the year 1969. I had been retired for 10 years from Civil Service at Brookly Air Force Base Mobile, Alabama.

We invited all her relatives as well as all of mine and most of those then living honored us by coming to enjoy with us a great feast including barbecued goat and 'coon, along with all sorts of good cooking. I will not attempt at the present to make a list of all of the more than seventy.

The next celebration was in LaGrande Lagoon on Gulf Beach Highway at the home of my son Floyd E. and his good wife Anna (Benton) Mancill of Dayton, Ohio. This was after the death of my dear wife, who had passed from this life on May 29th in the year 1971. The date was Sept. 14th, 1974. I did to Floyd and Anna an injustice when I invited all the kinfolks on both sides to attend, "There was no room in the inn" so they cleared out the double garage and included the large back enclosed porch, as well as both the kitchen and dining room, and improvised tables for all. A large number of more than seventy were present for a great feast including a big fish fry. My son Bill and wife Marjorie both came by plane from Petaluma, Calafornia. This, too, was a great success and all were overjoyed. This was for my eighty fifth anniversary.

My next was for my ninetieth birthday anniversary and at Bellingrath Road Church building in Theodore, Alabama, in the small auditorium. We were in a three day gospel meeting and homecoming. So many of my dear brothers and sisters from the Pleasant Valley and other congregations were present where I had worshipped with them over a long period of years. Many of them to my surprise and joy had contributed to a liberal fund and had ordered a fine new suit of clothes for me and presented it to me. My sons too were in this planning group. This was a big

event, a large table full of good food was provided and served by our home group and brotherly fellowship and good will as shown by everyone present. Christian love prevailed.

Now I am not able or qualified to do justice to all those who sponsored and made up the large group who planned this fourth celebration in North Alabama on the 12th of September, two days before my ninety second anniversary. Four of my nieces planned it all, then all the others joined in to help make it all a great success. I must name the principles, Minnie Lee Brooks of Owassa, Conecuh County, Mildred Dwyer of Columbus, Ga., Juanita Keer and her sister and son, Eunice Gainer both of Moulton, Franklin County, Alabama were the principles. It was for two nights at Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River, completely out of my range, I had never done more than cross this river if at all. There was planned an expensive boat ride at night on a luxurious rear paddle wheeler with pipe organ music and a steak supper, and for only two nights and one day.

At my first information I said, "I won't go so far for so short and so expensive." Each one was to pay their own share of the cost of all this, it just didn't fit into my life style. But I kept hearing more and more about who would be there: Isabelle & Joe Calvacca from Long Island, two of my sons, Louis & Glenn, their wives one grandson, Michael, and his new bride, all from Houston, Texas. Two of my sons and their wives John Elliott, Gerald Winford from Mobile, Alabama, Cecil Lofton and wife Corine Shaver from Ashville, N.C. & Montgomery, Alabama, Mildred Dwyer and her only son Fred Williams and his new wife of Columbus, Ga., Mary Shaver the widow of my departed nephew Roland Shaver of Evergreen, Conecuh County, Alabama and then the three daughters of my deceased brother Ernest, namely, Nadine Donohue, of New York, now of Sun City Arizona (this last mentioned was the only one not to come) and her two younger sisters, Eunice Gainer and Juanita Keer. Her son Tommy Keer and his wife Ernestine, these last five now live in Moulton, Alabama. They are to get the credit for pulling the gathering to North Alabama and to the Tennessee River and the city of Decatur. This city is where my brother Ernest worked for several years as main bookkeeper for the State Highway Department for roads and the Convict Labor Department, his last employment before his death at age 75.

This gathering of my nearest living relatives, I could not refuse or miss. They told me I just had to be there, for I would be one of the principals of the whole affair, just short of telling me it was to be my ninety second birthday celebration. They even arranged my ride on the way up a whole day before the scheduled date. I broke down my obstinacy gave in and got gone.

I was so delightfully surprised and so happy during every hour with all these I had so long and so dearly esteemed and loved. It just might be termed the crowning joy of my whole past life but for one unexpected event, our dearest Eunice was striken by a heart attack and had to be rushed to the hospital in Decatur just when we were preparing to leave for the lodge that morning. We waited of course until we heard that she was in intensive care, and was somewhat improved. She was then in safe care and what we all regretted she would have to miss the whole affair. She could not be released and was still there when all had left to return to their homes. All we could and did do was to pray earnestly for her speedy recovery. This brings to our attention the uncertainty of health and life. We have to leave it all in the Master's care. He who cares for the sparrow will surely care for his own, and he asked; "Are ye not worth much more than they?"

On Saturday night was the joy of opening all the nice and valued presents.

One dear son pressed secretly a fold of bills into my hand. He had to caution me; "Don't give it away." He knew this was one of my characteristics. I learned long ago that no one ever loses what he gives away. I just cannot be altogether selfish.

I gave away three cars after I found friends who needed them more than I needed to keep them. I gave John Elliott my broken down Volkswagon and let him lose it in hurrican Frederick.

My wife and I lost our home on the bay but in its stead we gained many gifts the value of which was of much more.

Farewell

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS, (PLUS) IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1902 - 1977+

This account was written in 1977.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, (1890 - 1900) several pioneer preachers of the ancient gospel of Jesus Christ, schooled in the principles of the Restoration Movement of that century, came into my native county of Conecuh, Alabama's south Central section; and into the community then known as Herbert where I was born September 14th, 1889.

Among these inerrant preachers, to name a few, was S. I. S. Cawthorn of nearby Andalusia. He later brought with him Jesse F. Love of Tennessee. There followed others, Carpenter, Busbee, Andrew Rhodes, David Coleman who was a veteran of the Union Army from Michigan. He had been converted from Methodistism to the primative New Testament Church of Christ a few years prior to his coming into our community. Later he moved to Pensacola, Florida and one of his daughters became the mother of the late Paul Simon of Pensacola. There were others.

Their visits and preaching were only occasional, usually short. Brother Andrew Thomas and his faithful and industrious wife, Mary, were the first Christians to live in this community. They had moved here from Butler County. There were sometimes long intervals between these visits by preachers. Converts were few and at the last and most were from three or four families. Only two were men, one unable to read, the other of impaired hearing. Aunt Mary's husband never bothered to attend even one service to my knowledge. So there was no leader. No regular weekly assembly until a congregation was established in Evergreen, Alabama in 1925.

The school house was the only place for public gatherings. It was at the disposal of any and all comers. Most of the teaching of the Bible was to individuals or families in private homes, and few of them were open or receptive. The preacher had to live in with those he taught.

I was but a small child but I liked to sit and listen to them and soon acquired some knowledge through the years of youth. Our home was open to all the Baptist preachers.

My father, mother, three sisters, and an older brother were all members at Sepulga Baptist Church. My father was their one elder who was the only one ordained to preach, baptize converts, preside at the monthly conference and to administer the communion service. This all in accordance with their written rules and customs. Only the deacons appointed by the presiding elder had any voice or vote in the decisions regarding member admission or dismission, or the business transactions as hiring or dismissing the preacher elder from their service with them.

The elder warned the members against what he considered heracy. So my father was instructed not to go to any of these "Campbellite" meetings and he in turn told his family not to go to hear them. My three older sisters grew to maturity and were married under this Baptist influence.

One of them, Sister Minnie was married to Mr. W. R. Shaver, a son of Doctor William Shaver, a confederate veteran and the founder of an extensive farm which at it's peak used 100 mules and as many plow-hands and furnished them food and clothing from his commissary store, paying them .50 cents a day for their labor. When his five sons had grown to manhood, they had expanded their business to include a gin for their cotton, a saw mill for their own and commercial use and eventually a power and steam operated syrup-making plant, also a grist mill.

Bill and Minnie lived near the school house and now through the providence of God she was free to go hear the preachers of the Church of Christ whenever they came to preach, a God given liberty. Hers was an open and honest heart and so the good seed of the kingdom was received with joy and rediness of mind.

The preacher told his hearers to write down the scripture references he used, to read them from their Bibles at home to see if what was preached agreed with the Word of God. She did this with diligence and sincere interest for she "Willed to do His Will" and wanted to know and understand the teaching.

She was in this way convinced that she had truly learned the right way of salvation from sin and error. She now understood the simplicity of the unmystical gospel when she learned by searching the scriptures daily as did the Berean's of (Acts 17:10-19). She obeyed the Gospel of Christ and was baptized into Christ, into His name, Christian, which she then took, dropping the nonscriptural name, Baptist. Thus she fell all the way from the grace of the Baptists, an act now which she had so long been taught was an impossibility, but now was done in reality.

Like Andrew who went immediately to his brother, Peter, to find him and bring to him the good news so she went back home to tell the good news to her father, a good and honest Baptist, that now she found a man, like Paul and Silas, who had shown her the right way of salvation, (Acts 16:17).

Her father, from the first, was most reluctant to listen to her but she was in "dead earnest" and persistent and insisted that they read the Bible passages that she had written down. He could not refuse to read the scriptures. They read and talked in love together at times until late hours at night. She continued to come and read with him. He still wanted to believe the doctrines he had heard so often, "that a true believer could never fall away and be eternally lost." Also she found him still firm in the belief that one can be saved before baptism and that it was not essential to salvation, "or once saved always saved," a pet Baptist statement, nowhere to be found in the scriptures.

Then she asked him if he thought a sinner can be saved out of or apart from Christ. He admitted that one could not. Then next she asked how a sinner gets into or in contact with Christ. He had no answer at that time to this question. Now she asked him to read with her two more passages, (Rom/ 6:3-5 and Gal. 3:26, 27). They read these together and this helped him to see that the sinner is "baptized into Christ," we're baptized into His death and raised from baptism into a new life now in Christ, where he could not have been until baptized. Then in Galatians, "We are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Then she said to him, "You see that before baptism, they were not in Chirst, but after having been baptized, they had then "put Him on," which is to say that then after baptism they were in Him, not outside anymore. This was a clincher, he had to admit that being out of Christ the sinner is lost, but having put Him on by baptism into Him, His death and His name, he is then a child of God, but not before. He went then to hear a preacher preach the simple plan of salvation, he then obeyed the gospel of our salvation, believing now that salvation is in Christ, he, too, was baptized into Christ where salvation is, confessed his error and was faithful all his remaining years until his death in 1942 at age 88.

All the other four of his family, wife, Rosa, daughters Annie and Florence and one teen-aged son Ernest who had with him been long time members of the Baptist church left with him, without letters of dismissal or letters of withdrawal, six in all fell with Sister Minnie from the grace of the Baptist church, into the grace of God--the only grace that saves.

All this background of my father's family I now add to my memoirs to show how they found the right way of the Lord and to set the stage for me to enter the Kingdom direct, escaping the snare of error into which they all had fallen, and how they escaped after being drawn into the Baptist net. They were now bad Baptists but good Christians and children of God.

This opened the way for the youngest sister, Essie, who had been persuaded by a cousin of ours to join the Baptist church but this she had resisted until she, too, found the right way. Also for me, although on one occasion I had almost gone forward one night when George Shears, a Baptist preacher had preached a good sermon he had learned at Highland Home when he went to school there. But I did not go up to the mourners bench because being a sinner, though a youthful one, I had had no Christian experience to tell not ever having been a Christian, I could not have had anything but a sinner's experience, so wisely I decided to wait.

All these of my father's family mentioned above have gone on to rest in peace with God, they departed this life in the following order, including two children, a boy Herbert at age 4, and a girl at one year old, being all their short lives at peace with God safe and in the arms of the angels. My mother, Rosa, the first of the adults to leave for her heavenly home at age 79. Next was Florence, the oldest sister at age 86, then Honie Ernest, aged 75, the youngest at death. Next was sister Annie in her 92nd year. Then followed Sister Minnie, the one to whom goes the joy of leading all the others to Christ, the Lamb of God, who redeemed us all from sin and the errors of denominationalism. She had the longest life of all and was reluctant to die because she believed and hoped to be among the living at his return, but God took her in her ninety-fifth year, in December of 1973, four months after her ninety-fourth birthday on September the first. Our deaf brother, Gillis, I helped him understand that he should obey Christ, saying in sign language to me that he believed Christ to be the Son of God. He was baptized into Christ by brother Guy Renfue, one of the preachers to come to Herbert to preach. Gillis obeyed the gospel when he was in his teens. Then he came to the worship service to commune with the saints. He never heard a word in his life and no guile was ever to issue from his lips. His tongue will be loosed and his ears unstopped at the resurrection of the just, for God will be faithful to impute to him no sin and surely will count him worthy of eternal life giving him a new and spiritual body; no imperfections. He lived an upright life and better than most others, he never told a lie or denied a truth.

My father, Mother, Florence and two brothers, Ernest and Gillis, were buried in love in the Old Town Cemetery nine miles East of Evergreen on Highway Alabama 84. Minnie and Essie at Herbert Cemetery two miles farther on Alabama 84. Sister Annie was buried at Mt. Zion Cemetery on Alabama 83, thirteen miles Northeast of Evergreen, Alabama on the Midway Road. The two young children were buried in Covington County in a family lot on our grandfather's homestead and near the pioneer cabin he built in the 1840's. In the same lot also are the graves of John Jackson Mancill, Annie (Liles) Mancill, his wife, also one of their sons, Calvin Mancill. I am now owner of one acre on which is this cemetery, the delapidated log house and a dug well. At the turn of the nineteenth century into the beginning of the twentieth, my father and his family who had left the Baptist church for the Church of Christ had become firmly settled in the Word of the truth of the gospel as preached by the apostles and evangelists (Col. 1:5). He had become a subscriber and careful reader of the Gospel Advocate along with his constant reading of his New Testament and by so doing developed in efficiency in the defense of the faith

once delivered to the saints. (Jude, verse 3.)

His long-time acquaintances of the Baptist persuasion continued to visit and to stay overnight in his home trying to induce him to return to their fold but nothing could shake or move him from his conviction that his position was scriptural and for this reason, right. I became an interested listener and a learner. Their new pastor, George Shears had been a student at Highland Home Christian College. He knew my father had the scriptures on his side, still he pleaded with him to come back to Sepulga Baptist Church saying "we need you back so badly and would receive you back omitting all questions, and, too, you could do so much more good with us than with the few with whom you have cast your lot. We know you are right in your belief and we would not question that and you can still believe as you now do in Christ." To this my father answered, "Now that you admit that I am right, why don't you come with us?" Their he sighed and said, "I cannot afford to give up my position with the money they give me and your group would not have the money to replace my loss, so I must stay where I will have this support." With that he left and never came again.

Reading the Gospel Advocate he found a request from brother Sentney Adamson, Springhille, Indiana, who wanted to spend the winter months in the South for his health. He wrote and invited him into our home. He wrote that he would preach for his expenses coming and for his living in with the family, board and a room. They agreed to this and my father sent him his railway fare to Evergreen. He set the time for his arrival and met him with his one horse wagon. He came and stayed the three months from December 1, through February. We had a preacher through this providence of God and had a regular Lord's Day service weekly. On Sunday, my father had all along rode with his family in the wagon to worship services, all the while he had been with the Baptists, and it was the same 2 1/2 miles to the school house at Herbert as it was in the opposite direction to Sepulga. We had only the morning service but now the weekly communion instead of once a month as he had been accustomed to, "according to Baptist usage." He understood that to continue in the breaking of bread was the same as continuing in the collection for the poor, if the latter was to be done on the first day of every week, so also the breaking of bread should also as well be on every first day of the week; just as the Jews were to keep the Sabbath day meant to keep every Sabbath holy so both were to be weekly as they occurred on the calendar. The Baptist had a custom of calling Sunday the Sabbath day. This was another error they had according to Baptist usage.

So Brother Sentney Adamson was with us two successive winters. He was a sound gospel preacher, a good teacher and he also wrote articles for publication in the Gospel Advocate. I was an interested listener and an anxious learner and student in the home while he conversed with members of the family on Bible subjects. During his second winter with us I obeyed the gospel at age 13, in 1902, and he baptized me at my father's water mill, in the presence of my parents, two sisters, and brother, Ernest. My father handed me the New Testament, opened at Romans, chapter six and said, "Elliott, read this chapter before you go to the water to be baptized so you can know what you are doing and why, also how to live your life for Christ and in the end receive the reward of eternal life."

When I went back to school the next day after obeying the gospel, I was accosted by one of my school chums who said to me, "Elliott, you ought to join the Baptist church because it is the largest denomination." I replied, "Will, my reason for taking the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life and few there be that find it, because wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many be that go in there at." So, I am satisfied to be among the

few." He made no reply and never brought up the subject again.

I lived a normal boyhood life subject to the circumstances and the environment in which I lived. I sat in the family circle nightly to hear father read a chapter that followed the one read the night before. Then we all knelt for his fervent prayer of faith and trust in God and gave him thanks for all our blessing. Also, he gave thanks at the table before every meal. I had the best of examples set by my Godly parents and was always thankful to hear him ask God to forgive our sins in the name of Christ and to ask God to "keep all our dear ones from harm and evil." These impressions have been my support from childhood.

I constantly read the New Testament and a picture story book of the entire Bible, and became familiar with the teaching of Jesus, His whole life--His miracles and His crucifiction, death, burial, ressurection and ascension.

I was always present at all the preaching and worship services that we had at the school house and every time we had a preacher.

Bro. Jesse F. Love and Brother Cawthorn were constant though occasional preachers to come our way. They went from place to place wherever they knew Christians were waiting to welcome their coming. Brother Love was the first to teach me what to pray for, who to pray to, and had me to lead prayer, and to lead singing. These were my first experiences in taking part in the worship services. Young men and teen-aged boys need this early training and experience.

When school was available, I was in school and passed from grade to grade, through the ninth grade. My last subjects in grade school were first year Latin, composition and rhetoric, plane geometry, algebra through quadratics, physical geography and Literature, Medieval and Alabama history.

At the midterm when I was past seventeen and a few months of my eighteenth year I left school to work as a clerk in a local country store after two years at this job with $125.00 I had saved I left home to enter Highland Home College Jan. 1, 1910. After five months I obtained a first grade Teachers State Certificate and began the summer of 1910 teaching school at age 19. I followed this for the next seven years.

At Highland Home I had my first opportunity to attend regularly three times a week, the services of the Church of Christ. At times I was asked to take part in the services, to lead singing, prayer or to serve with others at the communion table. This experience was a great help to me.

I was asked by elder Joel Davis to go to Sardis a few miles away to assist in the worship services there. I taught a Bible lesson or led singing or prayer or served at the communion table whatever I was requested to do, that I did with joy and gladness. Here I made new friends and acquaintances, some I saw and met in other places in later life.

During all my years of teaching, I seldom had any opportunity to attend worship and this only occasionally. But it was a joy when I could and did; it was a great joy for me. I pined and yearned for Christian companionship. Being a public servant in these communities I was invited and asked at times to take part or just to visit their religious activities, but daily I began every school day by reading a chapter of my selection from the Bible, led a patriotic or religious song, the students joining in the singing and then closed our chapel service with a prayer for our school and community. At one place, Belleville, Alabama, I was given a Bible class to teach. I was glad to teach the Bible anyplace, anytime.

I had to borrow a mule and buggy to get to go to the Church of Christ in some nearby places. I did this a few times to go to hear Brother Charlie Landers,

Brother Samuel Jordan's son-in-law, preach at Saville between Higland Home and Luverne. Once when I went there he was absent and they expected me to preach. This I learned upon arriving at the meeting house. I knew only the gospel of Christ and understood this was what to preach. So, I proceeded to give them a lesson, on Walking in His Steps, by doing His commandments. To walk worthy of the cause we espouse. I remember little of what I did say, but if I preached Christ and His cross it was a good gospel sermon and worthy of all acceptation, for he came into the world to save sinners, and that such are we all and always in need of a savior and His saving grace. That we are as Paul said of himself, chief of sinners, that we never complete our obedience to the gospel as He taught that it is our daily duty to take up His cross and follow Him. We never complete this job so we never need mention that man can complete obedience, it being a lifetime work for us to faithfully fulfill until death takes us from this earth. I remember better the invitation extended to me to go to dinner with the two Christian Rogers sisters--and how I enjoyed the meal and their hospitality at Saville. Also, of meeting their young, then teen-aged brother, Harry Rogers, that later preached for the Church of Christ for sometime and then abandoned the Royal church to preach for the digressive Christian church, to gain popularity and to fill his burning desire for the filthy lucre (money); which, "some have coveted after, they have erred from the truth and the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows," (I Tim. 6:10) if not in this life, except they repent the greater sorrows will come at the judgement of the last day. "They that are minded to be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," (Vs 9, ff).

I met Harry ten years later and will relate that incident in the appropriate time in these memoirs.

Throughout this period (1910-11) I had few opportunities to have any association with fellow Christians, except at the mid-term vacation or at the end of my school. It was too far away from Highland Home or from Luvern where there were congregations, but my faith did not wane or waver on account of these unfavorable surroundings.

BACK HOME TO TEACH AT HERBERT, 1911-1912

Then I was home again in the summer and my next school was at Herbert. I lived with my parents and walked to and from school, the two and a half miles. Here my sister, Essie, and I walked also on Lord's Days, to meet with a small home group and I conducted the worship services when we had no visiting preacher.

A Brother S. T. Butts, who lived in Evergreen and worked for the L and N Railroad, was a frequent visitor that year. He taught a lesson by chapters and made short talks.

During the summer of 1912 I attended the University of Alabama summer school at Tuscaloosa. I made contact with Brother N. A. Jones, who taught at Highland Home and asked him to walk with me downtown to the congregation. They asked him to preach and he did. They invited him back for the next Lord's Day. I walked with him again, the three miles. On our way he surprised me by telling me that he thought there was nothing wrong in using instrumental music in the worship. I asked him what authority had he found in the scriptures for its use. He had none, but said it was "expedient." (He should have said it was an "Impediment.") A few

years later I heard that he was preaching for a Methodist church in Ozark, Alabama where he was also editor of the county newspaper. His motive to change churches could have been his desire to increase its circulation, else it was simply popularity. Money, that is the love of it, is truly a deep-rooted force in the lives of even preachers. I wondered how many babies he had to sprinkle to please some parents and the devil. He knew better than this so, "Woe unto you preachers who are hypocrites." (Matt. 23.) He must have had a presiding elder to also please. None such has ever had any influence on me to cause me to waver from the New Testament pattern, though they were shocking in the extreme. This Brother Jones was our choice to perform our wedding ceremony at Blackshear because he had been our teacher at Highland Home and we thought highly of him. Lee, my bride to be, preferred him and I refrained from making any objection, but sent him a round trip ticket by railroad from Ozark, Alabama to Perdida--and gave him $25.00 for his services. While we were together at the University, Brother Jones knew of an opening for a school in Coffee County, recommended it to me and me to the County Superintendent, C. H. Byrd, so this was my location for the next two school terms before we were to be married.

My first day of school there I fell ill with malarial fever and my landlord called Dr. Harrison from Enterprise. I learned he was a member and an elder. So here again was God's providence, and I was blest to be as near as six miles away and could go at least occasionally. Here I met also Brother Rabon Reese from Industry, Butler County, a member of the church and a former student of Highland Home College. He attended worship services and was editor and publisher of a local county newspaper.

During these years from 1910 to 1914, I was making trips at every vacation to the home of Mr. John T. Wilson at Blackshear. All his family were members of the church and he had built at his personal expense, a small frame building for their meeting place near their home. I enjoyed being with them for worship when on my visits, which were for a week to ten days each time. They met to worship every Lord's Day. Most all the time Brother C. Petty from Tennessee lived in with the family. He preached and led in the services. Three of Mr. Wilson's nine brothers and their families were Christians and in succession, Obediah, Robert, and William were their leaders and teachers in their worship services. Two of his sons, Dolan and Arnold (Jack), and two of his daughters, Cora Lee and Minnie attended college at Highland Home. This is where I first met them in 1910.

Cora Lee was then 16 years of age and I was in my 21st year. They stayed in Highland Home College two more years, then he sent the four on to Freed-Hardeman two more years. Cora Lee was there only one more year and stayed home the next year. She was 20 years of age that year in November and on my visit at Christmas that year, 1913, we set the date for our marriage for May 12, 1914. I was then in my 25th year.

After our honeymoon at Mammouth Cave Kentucky and back to my father's home, I contracted to teach a two month's summer school, July and August in my home county at the Langham School. All it paid was $40.00 per month, and our board and room was $20.00. There was no church closer than six miles at Excell in Monroe County. We could not attend.

But in the fall of 1914, we moved our luggage (that's all we owned) to McKenzie, Alabama, Butler County, where I was again principal in a three teacher school. This was my first time to teach in an incorporated town, and the last year they used the old frame school buildings.

Here we boarded until Christmas with my brother and his family, then in the

next month, rented a little frame house and set up housekeeping for the first time.

I found two families there who were members of the Church of Christ. a sister named Drake and her one adult son, and a Doctor Moorer and his faithful wife. He practiced medicine and staying away from worship, true of too many doctors; but, anyway, we had five members and began regular Lord's Day worship in the schoolhouse Sunday afternoons. My brother Ernest had been a member before like Doctor Moorer, he practiced telegraphy and staying away from worship. He could leave his office and go hunting or fishing but not ever to what he esteemed less important.

Here was a re-establishing of worship at McKenzie where the careless had quit for a time, but since has grown into an established congregation. This might be said to be my first effort; it re-established a dying cause to quicken into a living unit in the Lord which it now is.

I was the teacher, song, and prayer, servant at the communion table until the school term ended. Then we moved back to Herbert into a tenant house on my father's farm. Here I revived the weekly worship again and walked the two miles to and from for that summer, moving again that fall to Belleville, 23 miles West in our home county. Here I found a small farm house on 35 acres of land near the village and schoolhouse, bought it and moved our furniture, bought a mule, wagon and a milk cow and entered a double occupation, teaching the school and farming, and soon was added to the responsibility the raising of a family. This last beginning resulted in our first stillbirth and buried it in the Baptist cemetery there.

We found not one member of the Church of Christ there, but we invited Brother Samuel Jordan, the President of Highland Home College and was tendered the Methodist building for the meeting. He condecended to come, live in our humble home, eat at our table for two weeks, preaching night and morning for two weeks. There were no responses. The people came and listened, his teaching was new also his practice. One lady took him for a meal at her home and expressed her disappointment at his failure to make at least some kind of a proposition. That night he spake of this at the beginning of his discourse saying in response to it, "I have but one proposition to make to men and that is that they obey the gospel of Christ:" and then proceeded to preach this gospel, its facts, commands, and promises, the commands for men first to believe that he is the Son of God, repent of their past sins, confess this faith with the word of mouth, then as Jesus had said, "And be baptized--immersed into His name and body--the church; to receive the remission of these sins with the assurance of remission--forgiveness of sins and salvation--gift of the Holy Spirit," just as 3000 had done on the day of pentecost.

After this meeting and his leaving, another lady visited us in our home and told us that she wanted to obey but that there were no others there so she had not done so. I reminded her of the eunuch, of his obedience and going back to Ethiopia where there was no other Christians yet he could rejoice and did in his own salvation and told this to others, as doubtless he did.

My teaching ended at Belleville after another baby, my oldest living son, John Elliott, was born July 9, 1917. At the December school vacation, I sold that farm, resigned my contract, because that year the patrons and trustees decided to stop paying supplement to my $100.00 per month salary leaving me with only what the State paid to a first grade teacher, $75.00 a month. They were first in breaking the contract, I taught school no more though I was offered a school in Baldwin County by Superintendent Scharp, I declined.

Another reason was because I was registered in 1917 for United States Military

Service, and I expected to be selected when needed, and knew I could not leave my wife to live alone with one baby to run a farm she knew nothing about. So I decided to build her a house near her mother and people. I then moved to Baldwin County at Blackshear, built the house in 1918, and lived in sight of the church building. Here for the first time, I could attend worship regularly and weekly. Her Uncle William (Bill) was then their regular preacher and I enjoyed being his helper. I took an active part, sometimes leading the singing, the prayer, at the Lord's table, or teaching the Bible lesson.

After two years there I was more firmly grounded in the work and the faith. I was then 28 years of age, more settled, out of the school teaching profession, although I had passed the state examination and had received a Teacher's Life Grade Certificate, but was now free from having to move often.

I decided to sell my claim on the new house to my wife's brother, Bosso Wilson, and found a nice house and forty acres near Silverhill in South Baldwin County. We moved there in December of 1919.

From this year, 1920, I was to really begin my earnest and true weekly devotion and service to my Master, regardless of circumstances. Though we found no members of the church in our new community, there were some six miles away at Robertsdale of whom I learned a few years later, also some West of us beyond Fish River but four miles from Fairhope.

I drove my mule and wagon with my wife, little son and our first baby girl born at Blackshear in November before our move in December. I made acquaintance with the Bee Wallace family. There was a schoolhouse we had the privilege to use to meet in, known as Twenty-Eight, the number of the school district.

I got a Brother Cain to come there and hold a week's meeting and six young people in their teens were baptized into Chirst. Back home on our farm when we could not make the trip more than once a week, we, "broke bread and worshipped at home," wife and I. We sang songs together, read a chapter, knelt to pray, rejoiced in the Lord with thanksgiving.

One of her first cousins, Wilton Wilson went on occasion to Twenty-Eight. Met Mr. Wallace's daughter, one of the new converts. They were married, bought a house near this schoolhouse. He was one of the Bob Wilson family of Blackshear. They were faithful helpers there, he led in singing and in prayer, a veteran of First World War and a life-long member of the church--both these have passed and gone but they left some grandchildren faithful now in the Fairhope church.

One Sunday on our trip to worship at Twenty-Eight, we feared to drive the mule and wagon over the Bishop Bridge so decided to cross the river on the ferry barge at Marlow Store. There were some boards of the floor on the bridge missing. When we got to the river's edge, the little mule refused to go up onto the barge, so I loosed him from the wagon, got help to pull the wagon on, then I turned him backward. The blinds on his bridle kept him from seeing behind so I urged him and he backed up onto the barge. He stood still as a statue til we landed on the far bank. Safe on the good earth again, I hitched him up-we drove on and arrived on time. I had the preaching appointment that Sunday and many more. Faith, urgency, persistence and the reluctant mule had saved the appointment, the day and the sermon, "that nothing be lost." After the hour, and the noonday meal, in the late afternoon, we gathered up the fragments, but decided on the bridge for the crossing homeward bound. The mule was careful not to step through a hole but over the missing boards as if he knew the river was below.

While living at Silverhill, Brother Charlie Landers, one of Brother Samuel

Jordan's sons-in-law, heard where I lived and came to talk me into a chance to get rich selling insurance. A Christian?, Brother Upton was supervisor of the A. M. Burton Life and Casualty Insurance Company was making a great success for the company in Pensacola, Florida and had a debit already just to walk into selling "sick and accident insurance," $20.00 a week salary plus all the commission for the business I could pile up but didn't. My commission amounted to a small sum. Truly I wasn't making much of a success farming and I let him talk me right into his plans, which included using me to replace a song leader he didn't like, to wit, Brother Elbert Applegate, an old bachelor at East Hill Church. This last part of his scheme didn't work but from the start, Applegate was not about to give up his prominence in the congregation and I had no disposition to upset him. His singing suited me very well and doubtless pleased the Lord, at least I had no ambition along this line.

This experience overall kept a dear and disasterous school for me financially. I did very well for a few months and lived in a nice neighborhood in a good house that rented for $30.00 a month; but my debit was across town, there was bus fare to the office and the pep talk every morning then bus fare to where my debit began. My ability as an insurance agent proved inefficient. My debit decreased rather than increased so I moved across town and into a $12.50 per month apartment.

I made a fair and stable show for awhile, did very well in the insurance part until the casualty part raised its ugly head. I wrote a $40.00 policy on a black boy for .10 cents a week premium, and in a few weeks, he died in the hospital on the operating table. The inspector from the home office in Nashville arrived on the scene and after investigating the case, refused to okay the death claim. Before I had even been notified of the child's death, my whole debit was a dead duck, too. The news spread like wild fire that the Life and Casualty Company had refused to pay a death claim. All my customers refused to pay their premiums, so my business was bankrupt.

I gathered up some tools and got a job helping build the Singer Theater building on Palafox Street. I lost so much. I had to move again into an $80.00 a month house in the West Hill area. Then it was that the providence of God in which I strongly believe, was beginning to work without my knowing. I changed my place of worship from East Hill to West Hill for my last residence, a gun barrel hotel, was in walking distance. In October, they had Brother Charlie Nicol of Texas fame for a two-week meeting. I went every night to hear him, he was good at preaching also at smoking cigars, while he sat in the boot-back's chair at the door of his hotel getting his shoes shined! I saw him but was unnoticed by him as I walked past mornings to my job.

But his fame brought visitors from neighboring churches, some as far away as Robertsdale, 35 miles in Baldwin County, Alabama. Brother Jim Cooper's mother and some of his sisters came to the meeting from Robertsdale. They met me and this way learned I was a sort of preacher, a member of the church and that I had a farm in Silverhill near where they lived. We had another son.

Floyd and Laura were born at Silverhill before we moved to Pensacola in 1924 and another son born in Pensacola, November 2nd, 1924, Louis Clifford.

I went to Sarasota, Florida that month to work until Christmas, then came back to Pensacola to move my family back to our farm home at Silverhill.

Sometime that spring, Sister Georgia Cooper and her daughter, Virgie, whom I had met at Brother Nicols meeting in Pensacola drove a horse and buggy six miles from their home in Robertsdale to find me. She asked me if I would come to

Robertsdale the next Sunday to preach in the Christian church, that she would make the appointment for me. This led to the restoration of six of their members who left them and came with me to begin again the scriptural worship of the old congregation and these grew into the present Church of Christ now well-established there. I led the worship services teaching them the right way of the Lord over the following years from 1925 to 1940, 15 years. At first I drove my little mule and wagon the six miles to Robertsdale each Lord's Day while we met to worship in the schoolhouse. Then we rented a hall upstairs on the front street and the group increased. We saved the contribution money, bought a lot and paid for it while meeting in the hall. I have written of some of the events of this period in a previous part of my memoirs regarding successive moves from Silverhill to Summerdale in 1928, then to near Robertsdale in 1930, finally to Mobile in 1940.

It was while meeting in the hall that Harry Rogers from Saville surprised me when he walked in to invite us to meet with them in an all day service and dinner on the ground. I remembered him when I was in Saville in 1910. Of course, we ignored the invitation, but I wrote him a letter regarding his reasons for leaving the Church of Christ to preach for the Christian church and told him to offer only scriptural reasons. My letter was ignored. He had no scriptural reasons.

We remained on our farm in Silverhill from the time we moved back to it from Pensacola in January, 1925. During these three years until 1928, we continued to worship and work with the church meeting in the Baldwin Hall. Two more sons were born and our family of seven children caused us to seek a larger house. We then sold the place near Silverhill for part cash and 20 acres South of Robertsdale and paid down on 12 acres and a seven room house in Summerdale. Before we moved, I had a visitor who was a deacon in the Baptist church in Summerdale who learned I was moving there and got an idea in his head that he could persuade me to join them and save a long drive six miles to Robertsdale. He knew I was a member of the Church of Christ and should have known that I was more interested in saving my soul.

I told him if he could show me from the New Testament scriptures that it would be scriptural to leave the Church of Christ and change to the Baptist church, I might consider doing so. I told him to read me a passage in the New Testament that tells that the Baptist church ever existed before the New Testament was written. This presented to him an insurmountable difficulty. He referred me not to one passage on the subject so he offered no effort knowing there was no passage to be found.

His only response to me was, "You seem more concerned about churchanity than about Christianity." This opened the door for a broadside. I gave him a worse difficulty than at first. I asked him, "Can you separate Christ the head from the church, his body? Will you say cut Christ, the head off and substitute John for the head instead of Christ? This stopped him cold--he drove away to return no more. I had an encounter with him some years before this. When I had told him I was a member of the Church of Christ, he then said, "I have never heard of the Church of Christ." I then asked him if he had read the New Testament and said to him, "You find nothing of any other than Christ's in it, that it says there is one head, one body, one Lord, one faith, one hope, one spirit, one God. If you remove the word "one" before any one of these and put the word "two" in its place, you ruin the truth and make the passage false. This is Eph. 4:1-5. The body is the church, the one body is the one church, so there is no more two bodies, than there is two heads. You better join the Catholics for they have two heads, one in heaven and one on earth also, one Roman Catholic church and one Greek Catholic church.

But the Protestants are much worse, they have no end to the number of different churches, and as well should say, just any church will do, and that is the meaning when they advise converts to "join the church of your choice." They should add to this advice: "If you can't find one to suit you, make one of your own, set Christ aside as its head and be the head of it yourself. This truly is human nonsense, not worthy to be called reasonable, but it happens that way. King George of England made over the Catholic church to suit himself and made Parliament the head. This was really a smart thing to do, give it a multiplicity of heads. This part may not be appropriate in my memoirs, but this part costs no one but are my memories of real incidents in my life.

While living in Summerdale, I kept up our family custom, going six miles to our worship services--somewhere and sometime and some way, I had the use of a car, a 1928 model Chevrolet to use some of this time of worship at Robertsdale. I lived at Summerdale in 1929 and 1930, but we lost this home when the depression of thirties struck the whole nation and were forced to move into a two-room house. Our last child, a boy, was born in 1930. So while he was a small baby, we gave up our home in Septemeber of 1931 and our family of ten moved into the two-room, unsealed, board and batten sided rough lumber house on the twenty acres, three miles up the highway between Summerdale and Robertsdale. The only advantage we gained was to be three miles nearer to our place of regular weekly worship. The only advantage this two-room shack had to offer was, even though the walls were unsealed, the rooms were large, 16' by 16' each and a roof over our heads. There was no chimney nor even a stove flue. Our wood burning large home comfort range was the only source of heat with the stove pipe run out through a hole in the wall. Two homemade door shutters, one wood shutter window, no glass, for each room. We had to improvise sleeping arrangements by putting up two double beds in the one sleeping room, with a double coil bed spring with double mattress. These we slid on the floor, one under each double bed, to be pulled out in the open spaces on the floor at night, on these four mattresses, all ten had to sleep nights, some little ones at the foot or between others with two or three of the beds. The first problem was to build a stove flue of brick from the ground on the outside. Before this was finished all but one, the oldest girl, Annie Lee, took down with influenza. One good neighbor, Mrs. Racine, brought food to us, afraid to come in, set the dishes on the field fence posts.

When I got able to work, I started building a four-room addition to our quarters, with two bedrooms, one living room and the whole upstairs attic floored for the boys spacious bedroom and storage area. This required the fall and winter months. I had surrendered my two farm mules and my wagon on a debt I owed to the merchant who advanced me credit for groceries and fertilizer on a crop that failed to pay the debt incurred to grow it. I did have some corn left for our bread.

I went over Fish River walking 10 miles and bought a mule from Brother B. Wallace and led it home. We had some good growing land here and started a winter garden, and when spring, 1932 came, put in the farm crops. We had chickens, cows, and some pigs. But most of all and best of all, we had my wife's family living near and they were all helpful in many ways. Everybody was in the same plight as we and help was very limited. I did not expect, ask, or receive assistance from the church, most were poor and as needy as we. My good father, though, with no income and not working anymore, having given up farming himself, did graciously assist me as much as he could, by a liberal gift of $500.00. This is all I needed to buy the lumber and material to build the addition to our house. I bought the

cheapest lumber--air dried, but dressed siding, rough framing, undressed, metal roofing, and rough undressed unmatched boards for flooring. I left the walls unsealed. We were happy and satisfied to have it this good. I extended the roof and the upper floor over the two existing rooms--here we had all the room we needed.

Our weekly worship at Robertsdale continued and all but a few of the members remained faithful throughout the ten years of the great depression of the thirties. We had gospel meetings and paid some money and more farm products to our visiting evangelists. Of these and their meetings with us, I now remember four tent meetings we had Brother W. O. Norton, Brother Hollis, Brother Clyde Fulmer, Brother A. H. Maner. For the last few years some were with us on a regular basis, every Lord's Day. Of these I remember Brother Douglas, Brother Tallman, Brother Barnett, and others. One I remember with some reservations, I won't name here, who was wrong in his practices and his life, whom we dismissed.

While there I was the first to go to Foley at the invitation of Sister Smith. She asked me to come to her home, bring the communion to her. I made two trips, then she found some other members, and they rented the Theater Building for Sunday worship service and this resulted in the beginning of the present successful congregation in Foley.

THE NEXT THIRTY-YEAR PERIOD

In 1942, I gave up farming after 25 years, we sold our farm and moved to Mobile. I had taken up the carpentry trade and regular employment while we lived on the farm, having been employed in the construction of the Grand Hotel at Point Clear in Baldwin County, and had worked in Mobile on the first housing project at the beginning of World War II, commuting from the farm home. Then was hired in at Brookley Field on a permanent basis. This was our reason for moving to Mobile. We rented at first, then bought a house in Oakdale.

I began meeting and identified at Oakdale congregation on Baltimore Street. Soon a new church work opened up for me back in Baldwin County at Fairhope. Brother E. V. Murrell had moved there from State Line, Mississippi, and had begun worship service in his home with two families from Twenty-Eight where the church work had folded up soon after I left from Robertsdale. My wife and I joined in with them and they welcomed us. Brother Murrell had donated a lot by his residence for a building and planned to erect a building. He was then 75 years old and well grounded in the faith. Brother Wilton Wilson and wife Viola also Brother Sullivan and wife, with us, made four couples. We met in his home until the building was completed. The church at State Line had closed up its doors, so the one remianing member there donated their pews, light fixtures and pulpit stand to this building. They offered me the collection made at the worship but I declined to accept it telling them to apply the money to the cost of the building. I was working and did not need it. I owned a panel truck and we drove over each Lord's Day. Soon after and even before the house was completed, Brother Frank Garrett joined in to help with the building. When it was completed, they expected me to preach every Lord's Day. My four younger sons joined in and went with me. We soon had some baptisms and other families came from the area and the congregation grew substantially. This continued for five years, until they could continue without me, one or two

others who could preach had identified with them. Eventually they bought property in a better location, built a modern building and have grown into a thiriving, working, congregation.

Two of the young ladies I had baptized there became our daughters-in-law. After my work in Fairhope, I began again in Oakdale meeting with them to worship. Soon I learned of a few in Crichton meeting on Mobile Street in the Odd Fellow Hall. They needed a leader and requested that I come meet with them. I preached there on Lord's Day afternoons. Two of our sons joined in with us there. They were a good help in the singing and other parts in the service. It was while we were meeting there that on a Sunday, the atom bombs were dropped on Japanese cities. All was excitement over the news and hardly expected to have a worship service. They began before the service was to begin asking me, "Brother Mancill, don't you think this is to be the end of the world?"

I opened the service, put them at ease and preached a sermon on II Pet., chapter 3, an appropriate time to tell them that God, by speaking, created the world and that He would be the one to end it. I read the whole chapter, then called attention to verses 4-7, and said at the close that we need not to be ignorant of what and how God does what man cannot do, by simply reading His Word and knowing what He has said in His Word to be the truth.

All the world will know when the end of it is come--when it does come. I assured them that this day will come but this that happened at this time--this bombing of Japanese cities is not that day, because it is the work and word of men and not of God. It was our President who gave the order to use this atom bomb. That men constructed the bomb, terrible and shameful as it is, it is only the work of men.

This effort at Crichton was the beginning of a new congregation on Union Avenue where they bought a lot and built a substantial meeting house. I gave over to brother Lige Mears who offered to preach for them. He continued with them for a time. For the success of this work, we must all conceed to brother James Lowery, for he was the mainstay, the main supporter, the liberal contributor of money for this work. When others defaulted or quit, he defied all failures and persisted through every difficult and discouraging situation, and there were some such. It was Brother Lowery who called me to come back and assist him through a serious circumstance. He also called on Brother Pervie Nichols to come preach in a meeting which resulted in a general repentence of many to hold the congregation together. Other matters later, too bad to mention caused many to go away to Sage Avenue nearby and to end in the sale of the church building and property by those who stayed. This last group bought other property and built and moved to begin what is now the Alpine Hills Church of Christ.

I first got acquainted with Brother Lowery when I first came to Mobile. I boarded where he did and we went together to Holcomb Avenue Church of Christ before I moved to Oakdale.

In 1946, I moved out of town to Hollinger's Island on Dauphin Island Parkway, but continued to worship at Union Avenue in Crichton during the time Brother Fletcher Cauthen preached there, but I lived nearer the new congregation of Belle Fontaine and was urged by Brother Buren Spence to join him in this new work he had begun. We had worshipped together at Holcomb Avenue when Brother Paul Murphy was preaching there. Brother Spence had planned a meeting at Maysville where he had a store in grocery business. He had engaged Brother Doom, who was preaching then at Oakdale, to do the preaching, but a relative of his back in Tennessee was sick and called him to come--so Brother Spence asked me to begin the meeting. I did for the

first week. I remember one subject I preached on the little word "Do." To emphasize the importance of the word I made the two letters "d" and "o" as large as the blackboard was wide, top to bottom, and used texts in which the word was prominent. There was a young man present whom I learned of later who was a Catholic in religion. The word got his interest and attention. He told me years later that this sermon put him to reading the New Testament and that he followed up by going to hear Brother Doom preach. He obeyed the gospel at Oakdale, became a real worker in the church and is now one of the elders at the Cottage Hill congregation.

However, after Holcombe Avenue congregation moved to Pleasant Valley Road I still worshipped there for a few years, but finally, more brethren from Belle Fountain came again to urge me to come with them. It was much nearer to where I then lived. We, my wife and I, decided we would worship with the Belle Fountain congregation. I was there with them through the 1960's and until they sold the property and moved to Bellengraph Road. This was done by Brother Archie Jarrett's insistance and in a way of which I did not approve. So I did not accord with the change. I returned to Pleasant Valley where I have remained to this present. It was a providential decision and placed me back with a strong congregation that came to my rescue when we lost our house on Mobile Bay where we had lived from 1946 to 1969. It was in 1969 that the hurricane Camille destroyed our house and much of its contents. This group of wonderful Christians responded so liberally and generously to help us in our great loss in this disaster. Not only did my own sons and daughter respond to our needs, nor not only did our home congregation and our own children come to our rescue, but brethren in Christ from many distant places.

I will insert here in my memoirs the documented list of donors and donations from other congregations. Some of them where I was known and some where they had only heard of me and our misfortune. Brother James D. Judd, who was our preacher at the time, with the elders and deacons, set up a fund without my knowledge or even without any request from me. The Red Cross also responded to the amount of $1000.00 and two orders, one to a local grocery store, one to a clothing store for food and clothing.

Altogether, the funds were over sufficient, and above what I could think or ask, to pay cash for a trailer, $3500.00, and all the needed appertainances--a water well and pump, supply pipe, septic and butane tank, electrical service installed and wired up.

When all we needed was supplied and installed, on a Wednesday afterward, my wife and I were called into the church treasurer's office, with my two sons who are deacons also the four elders and the treasurer. I did not know why we were in the meeting, it was a surprise to me. Brother Judd spoke up and said, "Brother and Sister Mancill, we called you in to give to you a check for the balance in your rescue fund." I replied, "Brethren, I thought perhaps I had overdrawn the fund." The treasurer then presented me with a check for $1731.00 and some one of them snapped a picture of us. This was overwhelming to us, our gratitude could not be expressed in words only but tears welled up in our eyes with thanksgiving.

With this extra money, I returned to my son, Gerald, $1000.00 he had contributed to our fund which he made by selling a church bond. The other I used to add a room to our trailer, the full length of it for a livingroom and a small extra bedroom.

However, my dear wife, Cora Lee, was in ill health with angina of the heart and blood vessels also with diabetes, and had been since 1959. To her the shock and distress from the loss of our home and the anxiety that followed was more than

she was able to bear up under such strains. In 1971, two years later, she succumbed on april 29th, at age 77. For me it was a double loss to lose her and break our union of 57 years. I was 82 at her death. Someone at the worship service the following Sunday said to me, "Brother Mancill, what will you do now?" To this I replied, "From now to the day of my death, I hope to continue to be able to keep up my work in the cause of Christ, to serve the Lord to the best of my strength and ability and to use all the days He will give me, knowing that my labor will not be in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:59).

FROM 1971 AND ONWARD

No one who has not had a similar experience can know the frustration that follows such a loss. I had no inclination or desire to live on there alone with no companion to share, no motive and little strength for manual labor to keep up the property or means to improve it. I decided immediately to give up this property and accepted the first offer to buy it.

My oldest son, John Elliott and his good wife, Clariss, opened their home to me to live with them. This has been my greatest blessing since that time. My zeal for Christ and His church has not waned or weakened. My stand for his cause has been unmovable and steadfast and I am determined to keep it so, "firm unto the end."

I have kept the faith, endeavered to live a happy life, to make others happy, by influencing all who know me to live to please our Lord.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
IN MOBILE, ROBERTSDALE, FAIRHOPE, CRICHTON, BAY MINETTE, ALABAMA
by Elliott D. Mancill, Feb. 20, 1982

The earliest to my knowledge in the period of the Civil War some preachers came into South Alabama prior to the 1860's and soon thereafter preaching the Restoration principles of the gospel of Christ in its primative simplicity and purity of New Testament doctrine of Christ and his twelve Apostles.

One of these was a native of Covington County living at Andalusia the county seat of government. His name was S. I. S. (initials) Cawthorn. I never heard what these initials stood for, first letters of three given names. He taught every man who would listen to him and others who happened to be passing and stopped to listen.

He traveled far and nearby horse and buggy to find any of the scattered members of the Church of Christ and made appointment to preach in schoolhouses in every community where he found a member, driving from house to house inviting everyone he saw or met to come to the meeting, staying, preaching and teaching also in the homes. This way he started small groups of converts, organizing, teaching them the scriptures and revisiting them from time to time. He spent many years and became widely known in many of the counties of South Alabama and West Florida. The church in Andalusia was started by him and many others.

When he was advanced in years, he got Jesse F. Love to come from Tenn. to this area and work with him. They held meetings together also debates in school localities. This Brother Love was one among others if not the first to preach the gospel in Mobile. Together they solicited help from others and raised funds and bought a large tent and chairs for seats.

Brother Jesse Love set it up for a meeting in Mobile, Alabama, lived in it and preached there, perhaps the first preaching and meeting in Mobile. It is likely that converts at this meeting became the charter members of the first congregation there. They began meeting in the Carpenter's Union Hall first on Dauphin St. in the early part of the twentieth century. There was also a church in the Pritchard area. I had heard from Brother Jesse Love that he had held meetings there.

During World War One I came to Mobile from Baldwin County, Alabama to work as a carpenter at the Todd Shipyard in the early fall of 1918 on the construction of the first concrete vessel built for the government by Fred T. Leigh (Ly) Construction Company of New York, and on my first Lord's Day when boarding on Conception St. I made an effort to find Christian brethren to worship with, boarded a trolly car on Sunday Morning in October 1918 for a run to Pritchard to try to find one Christian, not knowing even where they met. I was late anyway for a morning worship, so I simply started out knocking on doors. My first stop was with the lowly in an old residence in a field fenced by a rail fence. These people were not even religious from appearance, and they had never heard of the Church of Christ, but pointed out to me a neighboring residence saying, "They are church people." When I met them at their gate, I saw, when I observed their Sunday School books, that they were going to the Methodist church.

Anyway I asked the father if he knew of any members of the Church of Christ, so he pointed out a house he thought might tell me. So there I knocked on his door, he opened up ad I asked him if he knew or was a member of the Church of Christ, his answer was, "I am a member of one "branch" of that church." My reply to him was, I did not know that the Church of Christ had any branches, only that Christ said, "I am the vine, ye (men) are the branches," and "If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch."

He then told me the name of a widow, named Steadham, who he knew was "a member of "your" church." Of course I had to tell him I do not have a church, but only am a member of it.

So this was a disappointment to me and he had said he did not know her address. It was too late now, so I took the next motor car back to my boarding house, but determined then to go early next Lord's day morning in time to find Sister Steadham. During that week two of my brothers-in-law came to Mobile and got hired in on the job with me. One of them was a Christian preacher whom Brother Jesse Love had trained where he preached at the East Hill congregation in Pensacola, Florida. I was the first of us who found her home and learned that the Pritchard congregation had abandoned the assembling of themselves on the first day of the week because of sin in the life of one of the elders. I then instructed her to prepare the table of the Lord and turned back to find the two of my brethren. I found them ready and when we arrived at her home she was ready and expecting us. Brother Willard J. Butler the preacher directed the worship service, I read the passage in Hebrews 10:16-25 and called on Brother Dolan E. Wilson to lead us in some songs and to lead the opening prayer. This he did well and then called on Brother Butler to preach. He read a full chapter from memory and delivered a stirring discourse on, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life." I spoke some appropriate words at the Lord's table and served the

emblems. Brother Wilson lead a closing hymm and dismissed this small effort to revive the regular meeting of this congregation.

We learned the location of a hall where they had met for a time and instructed Sister Steadham to make an appointment for Brother Butler to preach in this hall the following Wednesday night. She did her part well and when we arrived for the service, there was a good sized attendance. Brother Butler did his part well and at the invitation a young man obeyed the gospel. We then learned that the new convert was the son of the elder who had sinned and been withdrawn from. On the next week came the 11th day of November 1918 and the armistice in Europe. Our job at the shipyard ended and we returned to our homes in North Baldwin County at Crenshaw. This was the beginning of the revival of the church and the beginning of the Plateau Church on Tellegraph Road not long after this date. The congregation had built a small meeting house and grew into a thriving church that soon after secured the services of brother V. P. Black who preached there thirty or more years and now serves as both an elder and full time Evangelist for the present Central Church in Saraland where they moved to a new and elaborate building from the Plateau location. I have kept in touch with all the Mobile congregation into my ninety third year. (Sept 14, 1889)

This rather unnecessarily long account of my connections with the church in Mobile is a sample of similar work with the Church Street, the Oakdale, the Holcomb Avenue, the Pleasant Valley, and in Mobile County at Fairview, Crichton, Belle Fontain and 1st with Bellingrath Road where Brother Paul D. Murphy now is the regular minister, and assisting him lately to establish a new congregation, one at Citronelle, also at a Miss. location.

My earliest connection with the Church of Christ began in my native county with Evergreen as County Seat of Government. In this county my farmer father and his family were at first, six older of a family of eight, all members of the Sepulga Missionary Baptist Church in which he was one of about ten deacons. Where they first built a meeting house of log construction in the last part of the 19th century. In his last years with them he helped construct a meeting house of frame and finish lumber, and with a cover of durable white paint. It still stands and in use by the Baptists, and bears the memory of Edmond Mancill, when he was a faithful adherent of their peculiar doctrine. This was all he had known from his birth until in the last decade of the 19th century. Like all their preachers he warned his fellow members and all his family not to ever go to hear any of the Campbelites (as they nick named them). His three oldest daughters, one oldest son and his wife Rosetta Elvira (Dillard) along with himself were faithful and active members up to the time the oldest ones had begun to marry off from his family.

The last of his three oldest daughters, Minnie Leah, had married into the prominent Dr. William B. Shaver family. He had been a doctor in the Confederate Army and with substantial salary, owning slaves and grants of land in Conecuh County. When the slaves were freed he hired in all the heads of families that would remain and work on his extensive farm. His second son, William Roland Shaver, married my sister Minnie L. and they lived on and he was one of the overseers on the farm of 100 hired hands and 100 mules. William "Bill" became a saw mill owner and operator and learned all about the timber and lumber business. They lived in a rough lumber shanty until he could mill the lumber and build them a nice home and a modern saw mill.

So she became independent and lived in the Shaver community and they built a two story masonic lodge and used the ground floor for the two room public school. They built a commissary store to furnish their hired hands and got the local post office in the store.

In connection with their farm they added a cotton gin also a local saw mill and styled it Shaver Brothers. There were four of the older sons of Doctor Shaver. He had a license to practice medicine and had all he could do in his buggy or mule back, saddlebag practice. He was my doctor when I, in my boyhood, had malarial fever every spring, measuring out doses of calomel (a form of mercury) for a purgative and capsules of quinine, the antidote for malarial fever.

All this leads up to time and circumstance together with the agreement that the schoolhouse would be open to any religious group to have and hold preaching services in it, none to be denied its use as a meeting place. There were a few members of the Mormon Church as well, also a few members, two or three farm families, of the Church of Christ. My sister Minnie took advantage of her new freedom of independence from her father's restrictions about hearing the "Campbelites," so she went out to hear Mormon, Campbelites, Presbyterians, and as well, the first Holiness people to preach in our community.

Dr. Shaver, nor any of his family were identified with any of these, but he did go to hear the Mormons and he knew their doctrines and practices were contrary to the teachings of the New Testament and he was concerned with countering their errors. They were raising much interest in the community.

At this time a veteran of the Civil War came to the Shaver Brothers saw mill and was hired to work at his skill to hammer out the warp in circular saws that had got dull and overheated, and as a result were warped.

Being himself a Civil War veteran he learned about this worker at hammer in circular saws was also a veteran of that war but of the Union Army and a gospel preacher, so he stopped by where David Coleman, from Michigan was working and asked him if he knew how to refute the Mormon doctrines. David Coleman had been converted in Baldwin County by one of a pioneer restoration movement in a gospel meeting there. He told Dr. Shaver that the Bible would do it and that was what he would preach.

So he asked David if he would start a meeting at the schoolhouse "tonight," Coleman told him he would do it. So he had two men to saddle mules and go from house to house and tell the whole neighborhood that a meeting would start tonight at the schoolhouse and that he had a man that "would" whip "the Mormons." Needless to say the whole area was aroused and turned out that night to hear the new preacher. Among them the Mormon members including their elder and also three of my sisters including my married sister Minnie Shaver with pencil and paper to note down all the scripture references. She read them and studied them "to see if what she heard preached was so."

My other two sisters were present and heard David start in Daniel two, forty four and as he said "I set up the kingdom in Jerusalem on Pentecost" in the days of these kings and this was the beginning of the Church of Christ which Matthew 16:15, 16 that Jesus had said, "I will build my church."

My sisters were accustomed to my father and mother inviting preachers home to spend the night with them, called him "Brother Coleman" and invited him home with them and they walked the two and a half miles. On the way home he asked them, "Are you Christians?" They replied, "We don't know if we are but only know that we are Baptists like our parents in the same church with our father and mother." They won't know you are coming home with us but we always have a guest room and they will like to have you as a guest. My father was a "good man" and hospitable to strangers and will welcome you. The next morning was Saturday and he had to be at their conference of their pastor, for he was one of the 8 deacons at Sepulga Baptist Church, anyway, out of brotherly kindness papa invited this preacher to

accompany him. He hitched "Celum" to the farm single wagon. So they rode together on the spring wagon seat. They got to the meeting house on time for the scheduled conference. All the deacons duly arrived and they expected the elder and moderator momentarily but he was a little late for some unknown reason, telephones were an unknown accessary in that last decade, at least out in the country districts. But they waited patiently and expectantly for some thirty minutes or more and so finally decided he was not to come. One thoughtful deacon decided to "deak" and said "I make a move" to postpone the meeting. Another deacon said, "I second the motion," and they all voted "yea" and after adjourning, my father said, "May I offer a suggestion that a preacher has come with me, why not ask him to preach to us," at which all the other deacons "deaked" all most simultaneously, "Nay, nay, nay" with one of them explaining why, saying, we all know that "only an ordained Baptist preacher is allowed to preach in our house," doubtless he could discern that their one elder would never hold all of them guiltless if they permitted Mr. Coleman to preach in their building.

My father could restrain himself no further and told what he thought about their decision and spoke in no uncertain sounds saying; "If preaching the gospel in this house would damage the building in any way, we ought all of us right now begin to take it down." Thus ended a very humiliating incident in religious circumstance. My father did not at once renounce his faithfulness to the cause he so long had cherished but it must have caused some very serious thinking.

But after my sister Minnie was fully convinced of the plain truths of the gospel and obeyed it, being baptized into the name of Christ and added to "the Church of Christ" she persistently read the scriptures with our father and persuaded him to come and hear several brethren preach at our schoolhouse. He finally gave up his defenseless Baptist doctrine and became a firm believer in the New Testament plan of salvation. He, too, obeyed the gospel and all through his advanced years, "contended earnestly for the faith for once delivered to the saints."

He became a subscriber to the Gospel Advocate and put to silence his Baptist preacher friends who were reluctant to give him up as lost to their cause.

I was too young to obey the gospel during this period of leaving the Baptist Church but listened to him refuting the Baptists preacher who continued to try to get him back with them. He learned to question them with unanswerable questions in which he withstood their arguments. His trying questions to them were mainly two in number. Number one was, "Can a guilty sinner be saved out of Christ?" To which they could only answer, "No." Then No. 2 would be "How only can a sinner get into Christ?" Usually they could not or either would not give the scriptural answer, from Rom. 6:3-5, and Gal. 3:26, 27 to which he would ask them to read with him from their Bible these two passages. I remember very well one of them who implored him to come back to them. He was the regular preacher at Sepulga Church promising to drop the Baptist regulation to receive him back without a vote of the conference. This was a man from Andalusia named George Spears. He said to papa in my hearing and clear memory, "Brother Mancill, I know you are right." Then my father said to him, if you know I am right why don't you leave the Baptists as I have and come with us into the church that Jesus built and called it, "My Church." (Matt. 16:16) And all the churches of the first century A.D. were called, "The Churches of Christ, (Rom.16:16) salute you." To this his humiliating reply to my father in our home near Sepulga Church was, "Brother Mancill the group you worship with is so small, (few three farm families) they could not support me to preach there at the

schoolhouse at Herbert Post Office 10 miles East of Evergreen, in Conecuh County."

My father Edmond Mancill saw a notice in the Gospel Advocate about 1901, that a preacher at Springhill Indiana offered to come South for the winter 3 months and preach regularly for any group of Christians for only a home and a family of Christians not asking for any financial support. We did not know at first his physical condition but father did not hesitate or inquire in his correspondence with him, but when he wrote he would come my father sent him an L & N Railroad ticket to Evergreen. He wrote him the day and date he would arrive at Evergreen. My father met him in the same one horse spring seat wagon and loaded on his trunk and brought him to our home, thirteen country dirt road miles East toward Andalusia.

We allotted to him our guest room, with wash stand and wash bowl with a slop jar and a fireplace and brick chimney for the three winter months, December, January, and February. Furnished wood in a wood box for his fire. We had to walk 2 1/2 miles to the schoolhouse for worship service and a morning sermon weekly. Most of the time we rode to the worship service with a wagon full of the preacher and our family this Christian gospel preacher's name was S. Adamson. This was for "Sentney" his given name. After his arrival at our home he told us of his illness; that he had consumption (current name for tuburculosis) and that his doctor had instructed him how to follow strict rules of sanitation; to wit, to keep his tableware separate and wash and scald (disinfect it after each use), to wash his clothing and boil it separately from the family wash, to keep paper sputum cups and burn them after use. He was meticulous in his body cleanliness and of his clothing. My mother kept a clean house, bedding and floors and free of vermin, so following these rules we were fairly safe from contracting this infectious but not contagious disease. He came South two successive winters, 1901 and 1902. During this second visit I obeyed the gospel at age 13. I carried in his water and wood for his fireplace. During this second stay in our home with my help and with my fathers carpentry tools he built me a little play and useful wagon. I helped him saw with a crosscut two handle saw. We cut down a black gum tree and from the trunk of this 8" or 10" inch we sawed out four wheels about two inches in thickness. He made them perfectly round and bored a one inch hole in the center of each. He was well experienced in the trade of wagon building which was his employment in a wagon factory in Indiana. Every farm had to have a wagon, the only conveyance before the beginning of automobile manufacture in later years.

I watched him work with these tools to construct, (cut out and shape) all the wagon parts made to scale, the axels, hounds, 2 bolsters, one for the rear was bolted down and a stationary one for the front called "rocking bolster" was held on by one main bolt through the center of it and through the center of the axle and the front end of the coupling pole that held the front and back wheels together. Then he had to build a wagon box or body and this was held on by standards, one in front, one in back on each side of the box, the last and important part was the shelves one on each side (shafts) to fit into a yoke which held the end of each side shaft by which the calf with a yoke on the top and around his neck-I hauled wood for Brother "Sentney Adamson's" fireplace. He kept my interest at high pitch all the while which gave him power over me as he taught me, in the family circle, the interesting accounts he selected and read to me of Bible characters and of Jesus and his life, death, burial and resurrection. I believed all these Bible facts of Christ and the real people who followed him.

I passed over Brother David Coleman and the debate with the Mormon elder who

heard him preach his first sermon. The elder (I did not know his name) challenged Brother Coleman for a debate. The Brother S. I. S. Cawthorn of Andalusia assisted him and virtually took up Brother Coleman's part for the most. Anyway this debate broke down the influence of the Mormon's in our community, they dwindled down and out, one of the leaders, Mr. Jim Miller, head of a big family, none of his own family except his wife followed him in his religion and after raising his family to adulthood he ended his own life a suicide. All his sons and daughters became prominent people, the oldest son George was among my best friends. He was elected sheriff of Conecuh County and later served as U. S. Marshall in Mobile County. I visited him in the last days of his life when he was in the terminal stages of cancer, all the Miller family held me an esteemed friend.

I have to back track to tell of the family of Brother David Coleman. He moved with his daughters from Baldwin County, Alabama to Pensacola, Florida. There one daughter married a Brother Simon, an elder in the West Hill congregation of the Church of Christ. She was the mother of Brother Paul Simon a long time member and preacher in all the Pensacola area. He was surely an honor to his grandfather Brother David Coleman, who lived into his ninety sixth year. I was at Brother Simons home for dinner when after dinner in 1924 they loaded his son Paul's trunk into a surry (double seat) and took him to the train in Pensacola when he left to enter Abeline Christian College for his first college year.

Another granddaughter of Brother David Coleman is secretary of the Warrington congregation. Her mother, the other daughter, married a man named Blalock.

I must bring in another paragraph about Brother Jesse Love which I left out. He followed evangelical work and debating up to the end of his life. His first work as a local preacher of the East Hill congregation on Alcanese Street in Pensacola and his last debate was while he preached at East Hill with a Russelite in Iowa. He was well viewed in their false claims and false book publishing company, the Watch Tower publishing house in New York. It was while on a trip to Desmoins, Iowa he met a tragic death by stepping from a sidewalk at a street corner into the path of an automobile, was knocked to the pavement and suffered a concussion of the brain and did not regain consciousness, but his son went to his bedside from Pensacola stayed with him to the end, took his body back to Pensacola for burial. This must have been after 1910, for I saw him at Highland Home Alabama College commencement the year Brother Samuel Jordan resigned as President of the college at a meeting of the church when they brought up a proposition to sell the college to the Church of Christ, needless to say this plan failed utterly.

Time fails me to write about all my work in restoring the church in Robertsdale in Baldwin County, Alabama in the years 1925-1940, and in Fairhope 1947-1952. Between these the church at Crichton 1944-1946.

Brethren with whom I worked I can only mention the names of those I can remember.

CHURCH OF CHRIST AT ROBERTSDALE

I will here record from memory my experience at Robertsdale in Baldwin County. In 1919 I moved from North Baldwin County to Silverhill in South Baldwin County, Alabama and for several years did not know there had ever been a Church of Christ in Robertsdale, Alabama.

Six miles from my farm in Silverhill.

Prior to the time of the surveying of the right of way for the Bay Minette to Foley branch of the L & N Railroad.

From reports of the surviving members mainly the Cooper family of Joe and

Georgia Cooper and their decendents and Joe's brother Robert & wife, Elsie Cooper. This congregation had an old frame rough lumber meeting house at Rock Hill, where the present cemetery is now still in active use about a mile West of the first incorporated town of Robertsdale. I recall only two of the preachers who held meetings and helped in its establishment up to this period, brethren Andrew Rhodes, followed by Jesse Love in the early years of the 20th century.

When the railroad was completed this congregation decided to erect a better building and move into town. About this time the Christian Church was active in Montgomery from its headquarters, in sending missionaries to take over property from the long established Church of Christ. They had this new property deeded to the "First Christian Church of Robertsdale." They soon got a new piano moved in and objecting members who were loyal dropped out voluntarily, Robert and Elsie Cooper took over and his wife occupied the stool at the new piano. This resulted in death to the old reliables so far as worshipping in spirit and in truth was concerned. I don't know how long this situation prevailed, but the active new group was greatly weakened and so unable to support a "pastor."

But in 1924, I lived for a year in Pensacola and in the fall of that year the West Hill congregation where I then worshipped had Brother Charlie Nichol of Texas there in a meeting for two weeks. Brother Jim Copper, an old member of Robertsdale, lived also in Pensacola and others from Robertsdale came from there to attend this meeting. Among them Brother Joe's wife, Georgia, and daughters, Mattie and Virgie, met me at this meeting and I moved back to Silverhill to my home and farm in 1925.

I was surprised at noon on a Monday to find Sisters Georgia Cooper and her daughter Virgie Finch at my gate. They soon let me know their mission and asked me if I would preach the next Sunday at the Christian Church of Robertsdale. Of course I was willing and told them to make the appointment. I knew nothing of how they got the consent from the leader and I cared less.

All I needed I had, which was an opportunity and my Bible. Plowing my little mule after dinner that day my memory readily provided an appropriate text in Second John Verse 9 "Whoso (goeth onward) transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." I told them that nothing could be worse than not to have God with us in what we do in teaching, in believing, in work, in word, in practice, in worship. I first emphasized that I was not the author or writer of this statement but that John the last living apostle wrote it himself, but that I freely believed what he wrote. So if this appears hard harsh language, not to blame it on me, but just tell John and God to soften up please.

With no further details on that sermon I covered every point of digression, item by item, and made it all clear and understandable to those present and closed by making them a plain proposition, that "I will be happy to work and worship and preach the gospel of Christ to you free of charge, provided we abide in the teaching of the New Testament." After the close of this service I took a seat, did not join them in singing and making melody on the piano.

Elsie Cooper promptly banged away with her feeble accompanyment in the song. It was no song of invitation. My statement of offer was answered by elderly Mr. Murch as follows. "Well we will "take a vote" this Wednesday night and let "Brother" Mancill know of our decision."

They had no need to let me know for I knew already on the spot what their decision already was.

Maybe I failed in the field of diplomacy, but I had no compromise to make. This is a brief account of my first effort that failed, but did not end there or then.

Some of the loyal Christians were convinced of the truth for which I stood. My next move was to write to Brother Jesse F. Love to come hold us a two week meeting. He came, Cora Lee and I kept him in our farm home, and we drove the little brown mule the six miles every night. I sent one of their members to ask the Christian Church "leader" Elsie Cooper, if we could have the meeting at their building, but knew before hand the out come. The reply sent me was, "Yes, we could have the meeting there, provided nothing would be said against the use of instrumental music."

I got permission from Mr. Hammond, a trustee of the school, to use the grammar school building which was on the lot that joined the church lot.

The result of this meeting, no baptisms but the response of six (6) loyal members, namely Georgia Cooper, Mattie Cooper (Nelson), VanBengegom (born in Holland), his wife Sadie, and their teenaged daughter, Mattie Belle (Bodle) and of course Elliott and Cora Lee (Wilson) Mancill, our five children then were under 10 years old.

We met on Lords Days only for one two months, then rented a local Hall, bought and paid for a vacant lot, had it deeded "to the Church of Christ." We used visiting ministers from Pensacola and elsewhere as occasion permitted but they settled for my weekly Bible teaching for a number of years, until we erected a building donated from the defunct Church of Christ at Blackshear Baldwin County. All the members there had moved away or did and the building was in the estate of Sister Annie Wilson. She and some of her daughters and two sons had settled in Silverhill. She legally deeded it to the church at Robertsdale, our member men and boys took it down piece by piece, from roof to sills, loaded all the material on a large truck brought it to our lot and erected it for use. All the while I lived at Robertsdale and until the church had grown in membership and financially and erected the substancial brick building now in use by a strong and thriving group and still growing, served by elders, teachers and by Brother Emmerson an able teacher and minister.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT FAIRHOPE, ALABAMA

About the end of the Great Depression 1929-1940 I gave up farming, sold my farm on Hwy 59, began carpentry work on The Grand Hotel Building at Point Clear, Baldwin County on Eastern Shore Mobile Bay at $1.00 an hour. I joined the Carpenters' Union, Local 89, Mobile, Alabama. This was a Godsend for me and my family. Wages $1.00 an hour.

In 1941, I moved my family to Mobile, bought a house and 50' lot at 1064 Arlington Street. A Brother Nelson, member of Oakdale congregation on South Baltimore Street lived then two doors from me. I was soon affiliated with them where Brother Pervie Nichols was the minister. He had preached in a meeting in a hall in Fairhope, Alabama, Baldwin County.

A Brother, E. V. Murrell, and his family moved from State Line Miss. This elderly (70 years) Brother was the guiding factor in the beginning of the establishment of the permanent congregation there. In Oakdale I did not feel needed so badly when I learned of the new effort in Fairhope. I thought I could be of more use with the two families worshipping in the living room of his home. These families and members there then was Brother E. V. Murrell and wife, Brother George Sullivan and wife (also from Miss). So I barged in uninvited with my wife

and joined them in this effort. This made "light souls" for the Flood in Fairhope of Satan and his forces of evil at that time. We drove 35 miles 6 or more years from Mobile. They kindly offered me the meager "weekly collection" but I insisted they keep it and let it grow. Only fertilize it.

Brother Murrell owned two adjoining lots on a corner. He deeded one to the Church of Christ, his new home was on the other garden and all. Before we knew what was happening he started a tile meeting house and laid the foundation and started the walls, buying a load of 4 X 4 X 8 red clay tile from the Clay City Tile and Brick Company on Fish River, five miles nearby. By the time he was 75 years old he had the walls up and the roof on "rightly dividing his time" between this worthy cause and his day labor for sustenance at probably $2.00 an hour or less.

We were soon ready to begin worship in it with chairs for seats and a table to stand behind and in use as "The Lord's." Fortunately for this effort a consecrated Brother at State Line, Mr. A. Merchant and a Christian, donated the stand, pews, lights and songbooks from the building of the defunct congregation there at State Line Miss.

I suggested they find and hire a preacher to begin preaching for us but they would not consent for me to go, so I had to be the makeshift speaker, teacher and part time song leader for the group which had begun to grow. Thanks to God who gave the increase. Glory, all the glory belongs to Him, with whom we only labor.

Four of my younger sons whom I had baptized at Robertsdale were yet home with my wife and me, so they began driving the old truck for me. Two families of Christians from Daphne, two other families from Bellforest and Fish River joined us, and swelled our number. I baptized four young ladies from a farm home. In consequence one of my son's, the youngest, found a life companion from this family of six girls and one boy. Another son found a fine young woman in Mobile, and the first Sunday she came with us in our truck, she too, obeyed the gospel as did also the four adult sisters and their Mother (from the Christian Church at Bellforest).

For five years I worshipped with them and taught the truth of Gods word to them and they bought me a new Bible and paid my gas bill for the 70 mile trip every Lord's Day. That Bible yet in my possession bears the evidence of constant use. Now an heirloom I brought a (fisherman) preacher with me and influenced him to do the preaching, which did not last long, but in the end too long. But they did better without both of us and in a few years outgrew the little "Barn Like" tile building and finished a new more suitable structure over nearer the business part of town and we were (Brother Murrell and I) in attendence at the "Dedication Speech" and heard about how churches are looked DOWN on for using such "Bark Like" buildings. Of course he and I did not expect to hear any praise (to God be the glory) so in this we were not disappointed. Read the whole passage (1 Cor. 3:4-5).

Happily I write pleased that the good people at Fairhope have a good measure for me witnessed at their homecoming a year or so past when only the widow of Brother Murrell and I (bereft of my dear faithful wife these ten years past) were the only two left of that first eight souls saved by faith and work and prayer, aged though we be.

A happy ending of this final word of praise and glory be to God for his wonderful work of providence and safekeeping.

THE END

Written at one sitting, 4:30 a.m. 1889, Elliott D. Mancill-92 yrs 5 mths.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
AT CRICHTON, MOBILE CITY 1946

A small group of faithful Christians began meeting in 1945 or 46, renting the Odd Fellows Hall on Union Avenue near Springhill Avenue in Crichton, which began as a cotton mill (now long defunct) town. I can name most of them as follows: Whatley and his wife Lula, Dearman and wife Willie (Lula's Sister), James H. Lowery and wife Grace, Grider and wife, Lige Mears and his wife. In all probability Sister Taylor stirred up the interest in working and supporting the interest of beginning meeting there on Lord's Days to worship.

I learned at Oakdale of this new effort and had a mind to help what and any way I might and could, so I joined in with my wife Cora Lee. Oakdale was on its own in numbers and workers prospering with able teachers and a regular preaching minister when I first met to worship with them. James Lowery and Grace were in the congregation on Holcomb Avenue and so were we for a time before I bought a home in the Oakdale area on Arlington Street. James and Grace have always been anywhere wonderful and liberal helpers in their beginning efforts. Without them this work at Crichton would never have prospered as well as it did.

While I was preaching there, when they were having their worship service at the Odd Fellows Hall on Lord's days in the afternoons, Brother Tip Grider started attending also and spoke at some of the services. We found soon that he had a hobby or an axe to grind on the question of fermented or unfermented grape product for the communion on the Lord's table. He was unable to get the group to switch to the strong smelling product, so he soon dropped out and started himself a new group at Orchid on Moffit road. This ended that but not all.

Next Brother Lige Mears began coming to Odd Fellows Hall on Mobile Street with us. He suggested that he and I take turns preaching and suggested privately to some of the members that he would prefer to do all the preaching. They all decided to use him and leave me to go elsewhere to work. I was willing and not contentious about any plan that was thought to be beneficial, and welcomed any change that might promote the progress of the cause of Christ and his church. It was at this instance that I saw a place at Fairhope to use my limited abilities with this group that I learned was meeting in Brother E. V. Murrell's living room. This was the point where my account of my work at Fairhope fits into the record of my work.

But to continue my account of the ups and downs at Crichton. They soon made plans after I left Crichton to buy a lot and building on Union Avenue in Crichton for sale by the Holiness people, went into debt to buy it and soon moved into the new location with Brother Lige Mears still their preacher. Sometime later they decided for some reason to change preachers so employed Brother Fletcher Cawthorn of Montgomery Christian College to come to Crichton to work with them. He was delayed for some few months about coming to the new location. So Brother James Lowery who was sticking with them called and asked me to fill in until he could come. This period was after the close of my work at Fairhope. I did fill in and was pleased that I could still be of some use again to them. I stayed on at the insistence of many members and worked along with Brother Cawthorn after his arrival. Our work together was very pleasant and prosperous. They even went so far as to select me along with two others to serve as an elder. I was with them for over two years.

I have purposely omitted details regarding Brother Mears for he is now deceased. But he repented of his serious mistakes of other matters. God pardoned him, he was reinstated and preached a long time at Citronelle in Mobile County and

remained faithful and loyal to Christ and His Kingdom until his death. He had a good and faithful wife to him and to her Master and Lord unto this day. All the church forgave him and he lived out his last years in the favor of God's grace and of loyalty to Christ.

This congregation at Crichton was active for a number of years but was never free of trouble without and within. It fell from bad to worse, and from preacher to preacher was buffeted by grievous errors, the other two elders (I won't name them) one loyal the other one of the last two left the Lord and His Kingdom. Finally they sold the property back to the Holiness people, and some moved to Alpine Hills out near the University of South Alabama, began anew and have prospered and grown into a strong, all united and loyal working force for the cause of our Lord and Savior. A number from the disbanded Crichton group found a welcome into the Sage Avenue Church of Christ and are yet there and faithful in the work of faith and love.

I stayed on with the original group until I was persuaded by the new and prospering group who with Brother Beurn Spence Brother Elzer Gerrganur and others who had established and built a substantial building at Belle Fountain further South of Mobile to leave Crichton and come with them on the Cedar Point Road, now named Dauphin Island Parkway.

I worked and worshipped, wife Cora Lee and I, and remained with them through the 1960's and 1970's until they moved from Belle Fountaine to Bellingrath Road near and in Theodore Alabama, still Mobile County.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT BELLE FOUNTAIN

We had a shameful and harmful experience at Belle Fountain, and a heartbreaking "Church Fuss," meaningless and damaging to the cause of Christ there.

I used the little influence I had in an effort to avoid the serious consequences that ensued and prevailed between the warring, wrangling factions but failed to calm the turbulent tide of error. Usually both sides are wrong, this was evident and definitely true of each side. You cannot make one right out of two wrongs.

This was all over the issue of supporting Child Haven Children's Home at Cullman Alabama. I always will believe it was purposefully brought up in the monthly business meeting because Bill Atkins had come there purposely, seemingly so, beginning to attend and worship there with us. He knew we, as a group, approved supporting Child Haven. Also it was generally known that Bill Atkins strongly opposed this work. They, the local group there, had been in favor of supporting Child Haven, but had not up until then made it a part of the church budget to support it out of the church treasury. They knew Bill Atkins would oppose this bitterly and that such action would bring up opposition.

Without going into the details of a "Church Fuss" it is enough to say this action for and against this new approach would bring up bitter feelings and "split the church." This it did despite my plea to let matters stand as they had been, to leave the question up to individual and voluntary action, each person to decide and do what they separately wished, to support or not to support Child Haven with personal contributions. My proposal was not even considered but opposed and discarded by both sides.

A debate, a public airing of pros and cons was proposed for each of several

Wednesday night services. I opposed shelving Wednesday nite Bible Study as we were in for a bitter discussion which would change no ones mind in this matter. Then I proposed any other time agreeable to all. Both sides agreed to this but no time was set for the debate, but they did all agree not to use our regular Wednesday nite, but it turned out that they had the debate regardless of any agreement.

Danny Harless was our preacher all through this period. He got up on the very following Wednesday night and launched right into this unpleasant harassment, disregarding my proposal which they had all agreed to.

I decided to keep my mouth closed and out of either side, each side thought I was for them, but I was really against both sides and had told all of them in the business meeting that both sides were wrong. One side, the side in favor of supporting Child Haven said the support had to come out of the treasury of the church-that it could not be scripturally done by private or individual contributions. This is in error!!! The opposing side said it could not be done either way, not out of the treasure nor out of the pockets of any Christians.

Anybody of sound sense or mind can see the error on both sides.

The side in favor of donating funds for Child Haven Children's Home proposed and put it to be decided by a majority and actually a vote, of adults, young children and families, all were counted for or against. My wife, not realizing she was actually voting, being counted, though I pulled at her dress to move by sitting back down, she not being seated was counted among the pro's. I remained seated throughout the standing and counting. The anti's there and then "went out from us because they were not of us."

I could name all those who left the erring congregation there, but won't, for reasons all my own, because I also have made mistakes in judgement. How blessed repentence and forgiveness are, but for these no one could have salvation.

(I leave off here at 8 p.m. Saturday nite. 2/13/82 to be continued) 3 o'clock a month later 3/22/82, spring equinox.

Soon thereafter we changed preachers and as a result, a movement to relocate was advocated, the preacher and some leading members, (we had no elders), decided on the purchase of property near Theodore on Bellingrath Road. At that time my son John Elliott had been worshipping at Pleasant Valley where I also had worshipped so my wife and I went back to Pleasant Valley to worship. I was not altogether in favor of the change of location of the Belle Fountain group, but when Pleasant Valley changed preachers and adopted the New International Version in 1978 I strongly opposed the use of this version. I was of the same judgement about it as were Brother Guy N. Woods and also Brother V. E. Howard, as may be observed in a sheet included herewith.

I think I am in good company with these two scholarly Christian men.

The End